

CONVERGENT PATHS: THE CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN WYCLIFFE, HUS AND
THE EARLY QUAKERS

BY

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Abstract

This dissertation examines the correspondence in theology, practice and social views between Early Quakers and John Wycliffe and John Hus (QWH), founders of the late-medieval heretical sects the Lollards and Hussites. It discusses the diversity of religious experience that characterized the first generation of 'Early Quakers,' and argues the end of early Quakerism as 1678, when the Quaker establishment completed enforcement of greater conformity in belief and practice.

The dissertation examines Wycliffe and the Lollards and Hus and the Hussites, placing them in an experiential religious tradition and exploring their belief in the need to return to a primitive church in reaction to the perceived apostasy of the Catholic Church.

By focusing on possible modes of dissemination of Wycliffe's and Hus' ideas and personal stories in works such as Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*, the thesis concludes that there exists a close correspondence among QWH respecting the following characteristics: (1) accessibility of Christ's message; (2) belief in the visible and invisible church; (3) biblical authority; (4) personal understanding of Scripture; (5) opposition to established churches; (6) return to a 'primitive church'; (7) attitudes toward reforming society; (8) the imminence of Christ's return; and (9) the role of women.

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Chapter One: Introduction, Methods, and Literature Review

1.1. Introduction

This dissertation examines the correspondence between the beliefs and practices of the ‘Early Quakers’¹ and those of John Wycliffe and John Hus, two medieval heretics whose teachings each spawned followers known respectively as the Lollards and the Hussites. In this dissertation, Wycliffe and Hus and the Early Quakers will be identified collectively as the QWH. The correspondence among the QWH is characterized by a similarity of theological belief² and practice.³ As examined below, the QWH were all seeking to create a new type of spiritual community that rejected the dogma and trappings of the Established Churches⁴ and, instead, emulated a ‘primitive Christianity,’⁵ which the QWH formulated based on their understanding of the Scriptures. The defining of and striving for this spiritual community lies at the heart of the correspondence among the QWH.

This dissertation demonstrates that, because of this similarity both of belief and of practice, the QWH belonged to a branch of Christian thought that was experientially based,⁶

¹ For this dissertation, the term ‘Early Quakers’ will be used to describe the Quaker movement from 1646–1678. The basis for using these dates is discussed in Chapter 2, Section 2.2., and ‘Definition of the Early Period of Quakerism.’

² Theological doctrine is the belief structure of a religious group.

³ Practices are the various expressions of the theological beliefs of a religious group.

⁴ The term ‘Established Churches’ is used to mean those churches that were the orthodox authorities, with state support, against which individual heretical sects reacted; *i.e.*, the Roman Catholic Church for the Lollards and the Hussites and the Anglican Church and the Puritan churches for the Early Quakers.

⁵ The Apostolic Era, which is the era of primitive Christianity, was the time of Christ and his apostles, ending c. 100 A.D. with the death of John the Apostle. Often referenced by church reformers, this era was used as a model for the form of the Church and the modes of worship. Groups such as the Early Quakers believed that this era also was marked by the presence of the Holy Spirit among men, actively participating in the lives of the Apostles and other early converts. See: Rosemary Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences: The Early Quakers in Britain* (University Park, PA: Penn State University Press, 2000); Douglas Gwyn, *Apocalypse of the Word* (Richmond, IN: Friends United Press, 1986); Hugh Barbour and Arthur O. Roberts, eds., *Early Quaker Writings: 1650–1700* (Wallingford, PA: Pendle Hill Publications 1973).

⁶ Experiential religions are those that seek both to experience the presence of God in their everyday life and to recreate the experiences of Christ and the Apostles in their everyday life. Bernard McGinn, *The Essential Writings of Christian Mysticism* (New York, NY: Modern Library, 2006), xiv.

mystical,⁷ and seeking a return to a primitive Christianity. The correspondence among the QWH distinguishes them from other spiritual communities, such as the Cathars, Anabaptists, Waldensians, and Free Spirits.⁸ By focusing on both the theology and the practices of the QWH, this dissertation demonstrates that, although some of these other spiritual communities may have shared similarities of practice, these similarities arise out of different theological underpinnings.⁹ Likewise, the QWH also held some of the same beliefs as other groups,¹⁰ yet with different expressions of practice.¹¹ What ultimately distinguishes the QWH from other spiritual communities is the unique grouping of specific theological beliefs and practices that make up this correspondence among the QWH.

The QWH sought to reform their mode of worship¹² and belief to reflect their fundamental view of the true nature of the Church,¹³ the spiritual community to which they belonged. This mode of worship was based on the QWH's belief that they could emulate the apostolic era, when the Holy Spirit was present on earth, by replicating the form of the Apostolic Church. In effect, the QWH were attempting to return to a more 'primitive' form of Christianity, using the Bible as the sole basis for their 'rule of faith.'¹⁴

⁷ Christian mysticism is the pursuit of communion with, identity with, or conscious awareness of the Christian God through direct experience, intuition, instinct, or insight. McGinn, *The Essential Writings of Christian Mysticism*, xiv.

⁸ As explained in Section 1.5.4.

⁹ Such as the reluctance to swear oaths shared by the Cathars and the Early Quakers.

¹⁰ Such as the common goal of Hus and Spiritual Franciscans to create a community based on the apostolic ideal of poverty.

¹¹ Steven Ozment, *The Age of Reform* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1980), 154.

¹² Mode of worship is the collection of practices and forms that constitute the religious services of a spiritual community.

¹³ This dissertation will use the QWH definition of 'The Church'; i.e., a spiritual community that is connected not by outward professions of faith and dogmatic following of tradition, but by a shared sense of the presence of Christ and his salvation within the community. See: Section 4.2.2. Jeffrey Burton Russell, *Dissent and Order in the Middle Ages: The Search for Legitimate Authority* (New York, NY: Twayne Publishers, Maxwell Macmillan International, 1992), 83–84; Gordon Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages: The Relation of Heterodoxy to Dissent c. 1250–c. 1450* (two volumes) (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 1967), 519, 606.

¹⁴ 'Rule of faith' is defined as 'what had been publicly "handed over" by the Apostles, that is, the tradition of belief found in the churches believed to have been founded by the Apostles and enshrined in the

Although the goal of recreating a more ‘primitive’ church was an important motivating factor for other sects and heresies, it was of prime importance to the QWH.¹⁵ Furthermore, the QWH developed their own theological ideals within a larger framework of reformist theology. This dissertation shows that, although the QWH was drawing on theological concepts common to most Christian sects, their desire to return to a primitive church drove these three groups to establish forms of belief and communal worship that distinguished them from other reforming movements.¹⁶

This dissertation also posits that certain spiritual and cultural elements needed to be in place for the QWH to develop their beliefs and practices. One critical condition was the translation of the Bible into the vernacular to make it accessible to the laity, thus allowing for scriptural study free from the constraints of the Established Churches’ hierarchy or the theological universities. This scriptural study allowed each of these groups to base their theological conclusions on scriptural evidence, giving shape to their reformist tendencies.¹⁷ Unlike other heresies and reformation churches, the QWH believed in the breaking down of

accepted “apostolic” writings. Canonical texts interpreted by the bishops, the successors to the Apostles, came to constitute what was the rule of faith, or norm of Christian belief.’ McGinn, *The Essential Writings of Christian Mysticism*, 484; An interesting distinction is made by Dowley: ‘The rule of faith and conduct held by the Roman Catholic is, “The Bible or written word, and tradition or the unwritten word, and both propounded and expounded by the Church.” The rule of faith held by Protestants, on the other hand, is, The Bible Alone, in which we defy the acutest skeptic or bitterest papist to extract one precept to persecute, or one precedent for ecclesiastical extirpation of heretics.’ Tim Dowley, *Eerdman’s Handbook to the History of Christianity*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1977), 115.

¹⁵ For scholarship identifying the recreation of a primitive church as a motivating factor for Early Quakers, see: Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*; Gwyn, *Apocalypse of the Word*; Barbour, and Roberts, *Early Quaker Writings*. For scholarship identifying the recreation of a primitive church as a motivating factor for Hus, see: Russell, *Dissent and Order in the Middle Ages*; Matthew Spinka, *John Hus: A Biography* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1968); Ozment, *The Age of Reform*. For scholarship identifying the recreation of a primitive church as a motivating factor for Wycliffe, see: Margaret Aston, *Lollards and Reformers: Images and Literacy in Late Medieval Religion* (London: Hambledon Press, 1984); Anne Hudson, *The Premature Reformation: Wycliffite Texts and Lollard History* (Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 1988); Ozment, *The Age of Reform*; Russell, *Dissent and Order in the Middle Ages*.

¹⁶ See: Section 4.2.6.

¹⁷ ‘Scriptural Study’ is the reading and interpreting of the Bible. St. Augustine believed that the Scriptures had to be examined through four lenses: the letter, the allegory, the moral teaching, and the agony. See: Ozment, *The Age of Reform*, 66.

barriers between the clergy and laity, convinced that this represented a system of worship more reflective of that of Christ and the Apostles.¹⁸ In attempting to break down barriers, these groups rebelled against the need for an educated clergy class; instead calling for people to examine and discuss theological concepts as they felt led, on equal spiritual footing with one another.¹⁹

The QWH also shared a belief in a form of ‘continual revelation,’ based on their ideas of a direct, experiential communication with Christ, a mystical experience.²⁰ They thus viewed the actions of the clergy as working against the salvation of the souls they were charged to protect.²¹ Unlike the gnostic Cathars or reformation Calvinists, the QWH believed that the revelation of Christ’s message is open to all, not just those either special enough to know the secret truth²² or wealthy enough to pay for education.²³

This dissertation identifies the specific social and political conditions that also fostered the development of the QWH. These conditions include: general dissatisfaction with the power of the established churches,²⁴ a form of political patronage or protection,²⁵ the existence of groups willing and able to cross traditional social boundaries,²⁶ and a form of proto-nationalism.²⁷ All of these factors provided a framework within which the QWH could

¹⁸ See: Russell, *Dissent and Order in the Middle Ages*, 82; Ozment, *The Age of Reform*, 85; Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 62–64; Gwyn, *Apocalypse of the Word*, 30–32.

¹⁹ See: Sections 4.2.1 and 4.2.5.

²⁰ Russell, *Dissent and Order in the Middle Ages*, 80–82.

²¹ Russell, *Dissent and Order in the Middle Ages*, 82; Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 70–73.

²² In the case of the Gnostics, see: Kurt Rudolph, *Gnosis: The Nature and History of Gnosticism* (San Francisco, CA: Harper & Row, 1983).

²³ See: Section 4.2.5.

²⁴ In this dissertation, the term ‘established churches’ will be used to refer to the orthodox authorities to whom the QWH were reacting. In the case of the Wycliffe and Hus, it was the Papal authorities, with the Anglican church added for the Quakers.

²⁵ Oldcastle in the case of Wycliffe (Section 3.2.2), the Bohemian Aristocracy for Hus (Section 3.3.3), and Judge Fell for the Quakers (Chapter 2).

²⁶ These include the preexisting reforming movement in Bohemia for Hus (Section 3.3.2), and the various groups of Seekers and communities of Shattered Baptists in regards to the Quakers.

²⁷ See: Russell, *Dissent and Order in the Middle Ages*, 83.

establish a theology and practice that separated them from the Established Churches and other sects.

1.2. Academic Importance

This dissertation is academically important to the fields of:

1. Quaker studies
2. Comparative religion
3. English historical studies
4. The study of heresy in general, specifically medieval heresy

With regards to Quaker studies, Quakers historically have been viewed both by themselves and by others as distinct from most other Christian churches.²⁸ Yet, different Quaker beliefs are represented in other Christian groups, existing prior to the Reformation, that have been labeled ‘heretical.’ This dissertation advances the understanding of the relationship of Quakers to the other Christian sects by examining the correspondence among the QWH.

With regards to comparative religious studies, the correspondence among the QWH is important in understanding aspects of Christian theology that were viewed by the church hierarchy as too controversial to be adopted by the uneducated laity, and which therefore needed to be suppressed.²⁹ This correspondence centers on the universal accessibility to Christ, the egalitarian nature of his message, and the notion that the Established Churches had strayed from this ideal.³⁰ Although this dissertation focuses on two heresies that manifested

²⁸ See: Gwyn, *Apocalypse of the Word*; Carole Spencer, ‘Holiness: the Quaker Way to Perfection,’ in *The Creation of Quaker Theory: Insider Perspectives*, ed. Pink Dandelion (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing, 2004); Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*.

²⁹ Robert Vaughan, *The Life and Opinions of John De Wycliff*, vol. 2, (London, UK: Blackburn and Pardon, 1845) 221–224.

³⁰ See: Sections 4.2.1, 4.2.2 and 4.2.5.

themselves during the medieval period, the examination of the ideas that underlie the correspondence among the QWH provides an insight into the larger panoply of non-orthodox Christian beliefs.

With regards to English history, this dissertation explores the influences and effects that Wycliffe had on subsequent generations. Wycliffe's insistence that the Bible be translated into the vernacular allowed for personal interpretations of the Bible that were different from the Established Churches' teachings,³¹ helping to foster an environment in England wherein a diversity of religious opinion existed.³² By tracing the effect that Wycliffe had on English society, focusing specifically on the case of the Early Quakers, this dissertation furthers the understanding of the roots of the diversity of religious thought existing in England during the 17th century.

With regards to the study of heresy, this dissertation explores the motivations behind the development of specific heretical groups, the message they expounded, and the effect they had on the larger Christian community. As chronicled by scholars such as Ozment,³³ Russell,³⁴ Estep,³⁵ and Lambert,³⁶ heresy was the culmination of a confluence of social, political, and spiritual factors that set the stage for groups of like-minded people to come together and form a spiritual community,³⁷ working together for their collective salvation.³⁸ These heresies had an effect on the larger Christian community, often outlasting the actually

³¹ Vaughan, *The Life and Opinions of John De Wycliff*, 221–224.

³² Christopher Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down* (London, UK: Penguin Books, 1975), 24–27.

³³ Ozment, *The Age of Reform*.

³⁴ Russell, *Dissent and Order in the Middle Ages*.

³⁵ William Roscoe Estep, *Renaissance and Reformation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1986).

³⁶ Malcolm Lambert, *Medieval Heresy: Popular Movements from the Gregorian Reform to the Reformation*, 1st Edition. (New York: Holmes & Meier Publishers, 1977).

³⁷ For the purposes of this dissertation, the term 'spiritual community' is used to mean the various sects, heresies, churches, and denominations that make up the larger Christian community.

³⁸ Russell, *Dissent and Order in the Middle Ages*, 91.

heresy,³⁹ causing the Established Churches to change. This dissertation contributes to the understanding of the effects of heresy by placing the QWH in the overall context of the Christian world and by exploring the effect that each had on society and other religious groups.

1.3. Literature Review

Below is a review of the literature used to define the correspondence among the QWH. First, the secondary literature is reviewed for each individual group, listing the sources used to define each group's beliefs and practices. Each section includes an overview of past and present scholarship, with discussion of issues arising from the use of individual authors and their works. Second is a review of the primary-source material for the QWH. This review discusses the issues associated with the use of each group's primary sources, where these sources are located, and how the sources are used in this dissertation.

1.3.1. Early Quakers

There is no agreement amongst Quaker scholars as to the form and strength of influence, if any, that various earlier movements, both religious and secular, had in shaping the Religious Society of Friends.⁴⁰ Since its founding, one of the most important defining characteristics of Quakerism⁴¹ was its appeal to individuals who viewed their spirituality through the eyes of someone 'seeking the Truth'⁴² according to the personal 'light within

³⁹ As described in Section 3.1.

⁴⁰ Dandelion, 'Introduction' in *The Creation of Quaker Theory: Insider Perspectives*, ed. Dandelion, (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate Publishing, 2004), 1.

⁴¹ See: Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*; Gwyn, *Apocalypse of the Word*; Barbour and Roberts, *Early Quaker Writings*.

⁴² Early Quakers defined 'the Truth' as the Word of God, as represented in the Bible as well as in their personal lives. See: Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 82.

their consciences⁴³ or ‘inward light.’⁴⁴ This appeal drew adherents who came from the various extremes of the spiritual spectrum, from those who demanded strict doctrinal adherence⁴⁵ to those whose acknowledgment of God’s divinity within gave them an extreme sense of freedom of action bordering on the promotion of anarchy.⁴⁶ Early Quakers brought with them a diversity of beliefs based on their past experience, which were then interwoven to form Quaker theology. This diversity, however, makes it difficult to identify the specific antecedents of Quaker thought.

There exists a significant body of secondary source material for the study of Early Quakerism. Pink Dandelion outlines the historiography of modern Quaker scholarship, placing its start ‘with the work of Robert Barclay of Reigate... [and] his unfinished 1876 publication *The Inner Life of the Religious Societies of the Commonwealth*.’⁴⁷ This work had ‘seminal influence...on later renderings of the tradition,’⁴⁸ of Quaker historiography. Since Barclay, a series of writers have explored the make-up and motivations of the Early Quaker movement, with the aim of adding to the general knowledge and understanding of the path of development for Quakerism. Successive generations of Quakers scholars have continued to enhance the understanding of Early Quakers by exploring the movement from diverse

⁴³ “Light within their consciences”: Early Quakers used this term as representative of the Holy Spirit.

⁴⁴ “Inward light” was the Quaker way of expressing the notion that the Holy Spirit was present within their everyday lives. See: Fox, George. *The Journal of George Fox*. ed. J.L. Nickalls . (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1955).and George Fox, *Some Principles of the Elect People of God in Scorn Called Quakers* (London S.n. 1671); Robert Barclay, *An Apology for the True Christian Divinity* (first published 1678, reprinted, Glenside, PA: Quaker Heritage Press, 2002). For Early Quaker usage of the term, also Leif Eeg-Olafsson, ‘The Conception of the Inward Light in Robert Barclay’s Theology,’ *The Journal of Religion*, vol. 35, no. 2 (1954).

⁴⁵ See first two chapters of Gwyn’s *Apocalypse of the Word* for a description of the Christian fundamentalist bent of Quakerism.

⁴⁶ This anarchical thread caused many to identify Quakers with the most radical of the 17th century sects, the Ranters. See: Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 21, 101, 105, 108, 116; Gwyn, *Apocalypse of the Word*, 1-19, 26, 35. Much early Quaker literature is devoted to a defense against charges of Ranterism, as in the debates between Burrough and Baxter outlined in Barbour and Roberts, *Early Quaker Writings*, 294-298.

⁴⁷ Dandelion, *The Creation of Quaker Theory*, 3.

⁴⁸ Dandelion, *The Creation of Quaker Theory*, 3.

aspects. Quaker historians, such Sewel,⁴⁹ Evans, and Hodgson,⁵⁰ approached Early Quaker history as a means to reinforce their ideas on the right ordering of the Society. These historians looked to the works of George Fox and other Early Quaker leaders for inspiration on how to maintain the ‘hedge’⁵¹ around the Society, using the Early Quaker enforcement of right conduct as inspiration for their own reforming ideals.

Indeed, Quaker historians often produced works that were skewed toward their own inclinations and beliefs. For example, Dandelion outlines how ‘Liberal Friends such as J.W. Rowntree,’⁵² used his pursuit of Early Quaker history to develop ‘an understanding of Quaker history [as] the key to a (Liberal) Quaker revival,’⁵³ disregarding those aspects of authority within the Early Quaker movement that did not agree with his own view. Dandelion also shows that when Jones and Braithwaite ‘took on J.W. Rowntree’s vision for a comprehensive and complete history of Quakerism...the Victorian Barclay was the author they used as both a foundation and a departure point for their own interpretation of the essence of Quakerism.’⁵⁴

Much of modern Quaker scholarship traces its roots to a debate begun in the work of Rufus Jones, whose main focus was a radical interpretation of an Early Quaker theology

⁴⁹ William Sewel, *The History of the Rise, Increase and Progress of the Christian People Called Quakers* (Philadelphia, PA, 1722) 1823.

⁵⁰ For a more detailed discussion, see: Thomas Hamm’s article ‘George Fox and the Politics of Late Nineteenth-century Quaker Historiography,’ in *The Creation of Quaker Theory: Insider Perspectives*, ed. Dandelion, (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate Publishing, 2004), 16-17.

⁵¹ With the passage of time, certain features of Quaker practice served increasingly to mark off Quaker society from the rest of the world and to maintain a clear separation from other segments of society. As Friends sometimes put it, they formed a ‘hedge’ around Quaker society. See: Gay Pilgrim, ‘Taming Anarchy: Quaker Alternative Ordering and “Otherness,”’ in *The Creation of Quaker Theory: Insider Perspectives*, ed. Pink Dandelion. (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate Publishing, 2004), 214.

⁵² Dandelion, *The Creation of Quaker Theory*, 3.

⁵³ Dandelion, *The Creation of Quaker Theory*, 3.

⁵⁴ Dandelion, *The Creation of Quaker Theory*, 3.

intimately tied to an earlier mysticism.⁵⁵ Within this framework, ‘Jones portrayed Fox’s message as a highly evolved mysticism, following in the tradition of the great Continental mystics and spiritualists,’⁵⁶ whose beliefs and practices were often relevant long after their loss of social agency.⁵⁷ Jones and Braithwaite incorporated their own liberal interpretation of modern Quakerism into their studies of Quaker history. Specifically, Jones focused on the mystical roots of Quakerism in *Practical Christianity* (1899) and *Studies in Mystical Religion* (1909). This focus intensified in the introduction to the first edition of Braithwaite’s *The Beginnings of Quakerism* (1912), which represented a radical reinterpretation of the roots of Early Quakerism, placing them firmly in the mystical, charismatic Christian tradition promoted on Continental Europe by mystics, such as Miguel de Molinos and Madame Guyon.⁵⁸

Jones shifted the focus of the roots of Quaker theology away from the spheres of influence of the Reformation and Apostolic Era prevailing in prior scholarship,⁵⁹ thus forcing Quakers to confront the compelling evidence that Early Quakers were spirit-filled mystics whose enthusiasm led them to ecstatic heights of spiritual experience, in sharp contrast with the experience of most Quakers during the later Quietest and modern-liberal periods.⁶⁰ Prior to Jones, most Quaker scholars focused on the Puritan heritage from which Quakerism seemed to descend, downplaying the mystical aspects of the early movement.⁶¹ Jones’ work created considerable disquiet among many Quakers, who preferred not to see their beliefs

⁵⁵ Two of the best examples of Jones’ work linking Quakerism to mysticism were in his introduction to the first edition of W.C. Braithwaite’s *The Beginnings of Quakerism* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1970) and his own work, *Spiritual Reformers of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2005).

⁵⁶ Gwyn, *Apocalypse of the Word*, xiv.

⁵⁷ Hilaire Belloc, *The Great Heresies* (Charlotte, NC: St. Benedict Press, 2009), 7.

⁵⁸ McGinn, *The Essential Writings of Christian Mysticism*, 361.

⁵⁹ Dandelion, *The Creation of Quaker Theory*, 3.

⁶⁰ Dandelion, *The Creation of Quaker Theory*, 3.

⁶¹ See: Sewel, *The History of the Rise, Increase and Progress of the Christian People Called Quakers*.

compared to the more radical strands of Christian thought represented by mysticism.⁶² Jones reinvigorated the debate on Quakerism's origins, a debate that continued throughout the 20th century.

Initially, whereas some branches (particularly liberals) were responsive to Jones' theories, other, more orthodox elements resisted it. This point is illustrated by the fact that, after Jones's death, in the second edition of Braithwaite's *The Beginnings of Quakerism*, his very mystical introduction was removed and replaced with a more traditional one written by L. Hugh Duncaster, 'on the ground that recent studies have, in the minds of a number of scholars, put Quakerism in a rather different light.'⁶³ The reaction to Jones' work was intense, regardless of whether one was in agreement with it.

Authors such as Barbour and Nuttall argued against Jones, placing Quakerism squarely in a Puritan mold,⁶⁴ with Barbour believing that 'Quakerism can historically be called the ultimate form of radical Puritanism.'⁶⁵ These scholars focus on the 'convincement' and 'seeking' aspects of early Quakerism, because these were often part of the Early Quakers' response to Puritan social constructs, not to the spiritual aspects of the Puritan agenda. For these authors, Quakerism is a unique reaction to the unique set of circumstances existing in English society during the Civil War, Interregnum, and Restoration periods.⁶⁶

⁶² Carole Spencer, *Holiness: The Soul of Quakerism: An Historical Analysis of the Theology of Holiness in the Quaker Tradition* (Milton Keynes, UK: Paternoster, 2008) 40-42.

⁶³ Braithwaite, *The Beginnings of Quakerism*, vii.

⁶⁴ See: Geoffrey Fillingham Nuttall, *The Holy Spirit in Puritan Faith and Experience* (Oxford, UK: Blackwell, 1946) or Hugh Barbour, *The Quakers in Puritan England* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1964).

⁶⁵ Gwyn, *Apocalypse of the Word*, xviii.

⁶⁶ Other authors who have advanced similar theories include Joseph Pickvance, *A Reader's Companion to George Fox's "Journal"* (London, UK: Quaker Home Service, 1989) and H. Larry Ingle, *First Among Friends: George Fox and the Creation of Quakerism* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1994).

Punshon surveyed the common ground between Quakers and other religious sects of the 17th century. In *Portrait in Grey*,⁶⁷ he chronicles the various strands of belief and practice that coalesced in the Early Quaker movement, taking into account the extent to which various contemporary groups had influenced the Early Quakers. He places the roots of Early Quakers within the larger English sectarian movement during the Interregnum period.⁶⁸ Punshon also describes the social, political, and spiritual turmoil that existed during the time of George Fox,⁶⁹ illustrating how the Early Quakers drew upon a broad spectrum of belief and practice in forming the Quaker movement. His descriptions of groups such as the Seekers, Ranters, and Levellers illustrate those characteristics of the first wave of sectarianism with which the Early Quakers were dissatisfied and against which they were reacting in their quest to satisfy their spiritual turmoil.

Today, the debate continues, with authors such as Gwyn espousing an understanding of Quakerism as firmly tied to the world of their Puritan forefathers, a world in which religion was the dominant focus of life, the Bible dictated an individual's actions and beliefs, and spirituality was tied directly to obedience.⁷⁰ For Gwyn, the Early Quakers placed extraordinary emphasis on the second coming of Christ, viewing it as both literal and spiritual. It was this belief, he posits, that fueled the Quaker movement at its inception. Gwyn argues it was their ability to reinterpret the belief in a literal second coming into an

⁶⁷ John Punshon, *Portrait in Grey: A Short History of the Quakers* (London, UK: Quaker Home Service, 1984)

⁶⁸ Punshon, Chapter 1, in *Portrait in Grey*.

⁶⁹ Punshon, Chapter 2, in *Portrait in Grey*.

⁷⁰ Gwyn, *Apocalypse of the Word*, 8; and Douglas Gwyn, *Seekers Found: Atonement in Early Quaker Experience* (Wallingford, PA: Pendle Hill Publications, 2000), 6.

internal, personal ‘realized eschatology’⁷¹ that allowed Quakerism to survive and remain relevant while other 17th-century sects disappeared.⁷²

Reay contends that Early Quakerism was an explicitly social movement cloaked in the trappings of religion, and therefore a direct reaction to the social and economic conditions present in 17th-century England.⁷³ Vann charts the socioeconomic background of English Quakers, establishing through the use of personal records that the Early Quakers came from what today would be defined as the ‘middle class’ of 17th-century England.⁷⁴ This social position gave the Early Quakers the financial wherewithal to support one another in their spiritual leadings,⁷⁵ as well as the ability to support those Quakers who were persecuted for their beliefs.⁷⁶ Ultimately, for these authors, the Quaker movement was shaped by external nonreligious factors, because the Early Quakers reacted to the social and political conditions around them.

Spencer identifies Early Quakerism as essentially ‘holiness,’ and she argues that ‘different interpretations of holiness characterize subsequent traditions of Quakerism.’⁷⁷ Spencer ‘define[s] holiness as a spiritual quality in which human life is ordered and lived out as to be consciously centered *in* God,’⁷⁸ something that dramatically changes a person’s life, both spiritual and earthly. She argues that, from this deep-rooted holiness arose the peculiarities that have defined Quakerism throughout its history. Holiness gave the early

⁷¹ ‘Realized eschatology’ is defined as Christ’s return in an individual’s personal experience, rather than a physical presence on Earth, See: Spencer, ‘Holiness: the Quaker Way to Perfection,’ 154–155.

⁷² Gwyn, *Apocalypse of the Word*, 3.

⁷³ Reay, Barry, ‘Introduction,’ in Hugh Barbour, *The Quakers in Puritan England* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1964).

⁷⁴ Richard T. Vann, *The Social Development of English Quakerism, 1655–1755* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1969), 58.

⁷⁵ Vann, *The Social Development of English Quakerism, 1655–1755*, 58.

⁷⁶ Vann, *The Social Development of English Quakerism, 1655–1755*, 58.

⁷⁷ Spencer, ‘Holiness: the Quaker Way to Perfection,’ 150.

⁷⁸ Spencer, ‘Holiness: the Quaker Way to Perfection,’ 151.

movement its shape and a construct around which future generations could develop the ‘hedge’⁷⁹ that separated Quakerism from the rest of society. For Spencer, the Quaker understanding of holiness and the transformative effect of ‘turning to the Light’ was at the heart of the Early Quaker movement.⁸⁰ This led the Early Quakers to seek a form of ‘perfection’ both spiritually and in their everyday lives.⁸¹ For Spencer, the Early Quaker pursuit of ‘perfection’ was one of the main forces in the reordering by George Fox and other Quaker leaders known as the ‘Gospel Ordering’ of the Society of Friends, culminating in 1677.⁸² Her work is more thoroughly explored in her book *Holiness: the Soul of Quakerism*.⁸³ The article in *The Creation of Quaker Theory* represents the bulk of the arguments from the book that deal directly with this dissertation, namely the list of characteristics she develops.

Although drawing on source material similar to Spencer, Moore comes to a significantly different conclusion. Moore explores the correspondence between the Orthodox and the ‘fringe’ elements of Early Quakerism, focusing on the role played by these two branches of the Early Quaker movement in shaping modern Quakerism.⁸⁴ Moore posits that, although George Fox is often considered the founder of Quakerism, this may have more to do

⁷⁹ Quaker scholars, such as Gay Pilgrim, have developed a theory on the creation of a metaphorical ‘hedge’ built up around the Quaker movement during the 19th century to maintain their ‘otherness’ from the rest of society. This hedge was based on Quaker peculiarities (such as dress and speech), because the Quaker movement had no central dogmas that defined its boundaries. See: Pilgrim, ‘Taming Anarchy: Quaker Alternative Ordering and “Otherness,”’ in *The Creation of Quaker Theory: Insider Perspectives*, ed. Dandelion, (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate Publishing, 2004), 208, 214 and Gay Pilgrim, ‘The Quakers: Toward Alternate Ordering’ in *Predicting Religion: Christian, Secular and Alternative Futures*, ed. Grace Davie, Paul Heelas, and Linda Woodhead (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing, 2003).

⁸⁰ Turning to the Light: for the purposes of this thesis, it is the first step in the early Quaker conversion experience, wherein a person experiences for the first time the presence of the Light of God inside themselves, opening their minds and bodies to completely allow the presence of God to be felt in their everyday life.

⁸¹ For Spencer’s definition of perfection, see: Spencer, ‘Holiness: the Quaker Way to Perfection,’ 159; or Spencer, *Holiness: The Soul of Quakerism*, 32.

⁸² For a description of Fox’s ‘Gospel Ordering,’ see: Moore, Chapter 10, ‘Foundations of the Gospel Order’ in *The Light in Their Consciences*, 129-141.

⁸³ Spencer, *Holiness: The Soul of Quakerism*, 32.

⁸⁴ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, xii.

with the fact that he lived longer than any of the other first truly powerful leaders of Quakerism.⁸⁵ By 1699, Nayler, Farnsworth, Hogsworth, and Fell had all passed on. Yet Early Quaker writings reveal that, in the first years of the Quaker movement, numerous leaders contributed the knowledge and insight they had gained from their pre-Quaker experiences. These different leaders came into conflict with one another over the specific form Quakerism should take. When these conflicts were unresolved,⁸⁶ individuals were expelled or excluded from the larger Quaker community, sometimes returning to their previous church or creating their own unique form of worship.

Other scholars, such as Tarter,⁸⁷ Pilgrim,⁸⁸ Reynolds,⁸⁹ and Ingle,⁹⁰ examine Quakerism's radical roots, continuing Jones' explorations of the mystical tradition from which Quakerism emerged. These scholars agree with Jones' belief, as stated by Punshon, that 'Quakerism was this high-tide, spirit flooding kind of religious experience and that it had lineal ancestors among the mystics of medieval and early modern Europe.'⁹¹

Reynolds presents a key connection between the Gnostics and the Early Quakers in that both groups placed emphasis on 'the Light' of God within each person.⁹² He posits that the theological importance both groups placed on 'the Light' linked them to one another, illustrating that the same impulses that fueled Gnosticism can be found in Quakerism.⁹³

⁸⁵ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 226-227.

⁸⁶ One example is seen in the 'Proud Quaker' affair. A Welsh Quaker named Rhys Jones led the 'Proud Quakers,' a group who rejected Fox's authority. See: Barry Reay, *The Quakers and the English Revolution* (London, UK: Temple Smith, 1985), 120; Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 7.

⁸⁷ Michele Lise Tarter, "'Go North!'" The Journey towards First-Generation Friends and their Prophecy of Celestial Faith' in *The Creation of Quaker Theory: Insider Perspectives*, ed. Dandelion, 83-98.

⁸⁸ Pilgrim, 'Taming Anarchy,' 206-224.

⁸⁹ Glen D. Reynolds, 'George Fox and Christian Gnosis,' in *The Creation of Quaker Theory: Insider Perspectives*, ed. Dandelion, 99-115.

⁹⁰ Larry H Ingle. *First Among Friends*.

⁹¹ Punshon, *Portrait in Grey*, 227.

⁹² Reynolds, 'George Fox and Christian Gnosis,' 101.

⁹³ Reynolds, 'George Fox and Christian Gnosis,' 101.

Authors such as Trevett⁹⁴, Mack,⁹⁵ and Tarter⁹⁶ have focused on the role of women in the Early Quaker movement. Mack and Trevett ‘note that the tradition that women might be prophets...made their visions and messages easier for other radical Puritans to accept and opened the way for the egalitarian role of women.’⁹⁷ Mack’s work places Quaker women within the larger framework of 17th-century ecstatic traditions, arguing that Quakerism provided an outlet for a larger spiritual movement in England.⁹⁸

Tarter’s work focuses on how women affected, and were affected by, the Early Quaker movement, particularly the censorship ultimately imposed on women by the central authorities in London.⁹⁹ She outlines how women within the Early Quaker movement went from being at the forefront in terms of leadership and activism to being marginalized by the increased centralization and authority exercised by the male Quaker leadership in London. Along with Mack and Trevett, her work explores the censorship employed by the London Monthly Meeting and the Second-Day Morning Meeting [SDMM], censorship that was used to suppress those seen as being too embarrassing in their ecstatic embrace of Quakerism, most often women. Her article, ‘Quaking in the Light: The Politics of Quaker Women’s Corporeal Prophecy in the Seventeenth-Century Transatlantic World,’¹⁰⁰ outlines her interpretation of how the increasing controls placed on women decreased the Early Quaker reliance on corporeal prophecy¹⁰¹ and feminine spirituality within the Quaker movement.¹⁰²

⁹⁴ Christine Trevett, *Women and Quakerism in the 17th Century* (York, UK: Ebor Press, 1991).

⁹⁵ Phyllis Mack, *Visionary Women: Ecstatic Prophecy in Seventeenth-Century England* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1992).

⁹⁶ Tarter, ‘Go North!’ 83–98.

⁹⁷ Dandelion, *The Creation of Quaker Theory*, 24.

⁹⁸ Mack, *Visionary Women*. 1–11.

⁹⁹ Tarter, ‘Go North!’ 87–89.

¹⁰⁰ Michele Tarter, ‘Quaking in the Light: The Politics of Quaker Women’s Corporeal Prophecy in the Seventeenth-Century Transatlantic World,’ in *A Centre of Wonders: The Body in Early America*, ed. Janet Moore Lindman and Michele Lise Tarter (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001).

¹⁰¹ Tarter, ‘Quaking in the Light,’ 146.

The second half of the article deals with Quaker women in America, which is outside of the scope of this dissertation.

Pilgrim, in two articles,¹⁰³ examines the Quaker relationship to Heterotopia, or how ‘incongruous juxtapositions challenge preconceived notions.’¹⁰⁴ She explores how the Early Quakers’ actions and beliefs marked them as ‘Other,’ separate from the rest of society and therefore something to be feared by the more orthodox areas of society.¹⁰⁵ She argues that the Early Quakers were creating heterotopias, spaces of otherness, which provided society with an alternative way of experiencing spirituality. She argues that the creation of these heterotopias forced the authorities to persecute the Early Quakers, as they represented a direct threat to the stability of society.¹⁰⁶ By exploring these heterotopias, Pilgrim helps to show those peculiarities that separated the Early Quakers from the rest of society.

The work of Dandelion brings together the disparate streams of study of the Early Quakers, arguing that each approach has its merits. In *The Creation of Quaker Theory: Insider Perspectives*, Dandelion has assembled a valuable compendium of the different theories and trends in modern Quaker scholarship. In *The Liturgies of Quakerism*,¹⁰⁷ Dandelion explores the nature of liturgy within a form of worship based in silence. He also explores Early Quakers’ unique ideas on concepts such as ‘time,’ ‘history,’ ‘truth,’ and

¹⁰² Tarter, ‘Quaking in the Light,’ 147.

¹⁰³ Pilgrim, ‘Taming Anarchy,’ and Pilgrim, ‘The Quakers: Toward Alternate Ordering’.

¹⁰⁴ Pilgrim, ‘Taming Anarchy,’ 208.

¹⁰⁵ Pilgrim, ‘Taming Anarchy,’ 209-210.

¹⁰⁶ Pilgrim, ‘Taming Anarchy,’ 210

¹⁰⁷ Pink Dandelion, *The Liturgies Of Quakerism* (Liturgy, Worship and Society Series) (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2005).

‘apocalypse,’ which allowed Quakers to dispense with outward forms of worship and replace them with a ‘liturgy of silence.’¹⁰⁸

These scholars provide extensive evidence to support their hypotheses, from direct evidence in the writings of the earliest Quakers (Moore¹⁰⁹), to the use of different disciplines, such as Marxist theory (Reay¹¹⁰) or feminist theory (Tarter¹¹¹). Ultimately, this author agrees with those scholars, such as Jones, Tarter, Moore, and Reynolds, who view Quakerism as inherently mystical in nature. Many scholars listed above have investigated the antecedents to Quakerism. Jones had a tremendous effect in this field with his work focusing on the mystical tradition behind the Early Quakers.¹¹² At the same time, Braithwaite was exploring the social and political roots of the Quakers.¹¹³ Following them were Barbour and Roberts, who in collecting together the writings of the Early Quakers also investigated the origins of Quakerism, placing them more firmly in the Puritan tradition.¹¹⁴

This dissertation will focus primarily on the experiential and primitive-church-seeking aspects of the Early Quaker movement, those aspects that formed much of the foundation upon which the movement was built. Building upon the works of Jones, Gwyn, Moore, Spencer, and Tarter, this dissertation argues that the Early Quakers, although radical for their time, had antecedents in the ideals espoused by Wycliffe and Hus.

¹⁰⁸ ‘Liturgy deals with both the presence and perceived absence of God, the liturgy of silence finding the presence in the absence of the outward and countering the perceived absence in the depths of silence.’ From: Dandelion, *The Liturgies of Quakerism*, 2.

¹⁰⁹ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*.

¹¹⁰ Reay, *The Quakers and the English Revolution*.

¹¹¹ Tarter, ‘Go North!’

¹¹² Hamm, ‘George Fox and the Politics of Late Nineteenth-century Quaker Historiography,’ 11.

¹¹³ Braithwaite, *The Beginnings of Quakerism*. See: Hamm, ‘George Fox and the Politics of Late Nineteenth-century Quaker Historiography,’ 11, 15.

¹¹⁴ Barbour and Roberts, *Early Quaker Writings*.

1.3.2. Heresy

1.3.2.1. General Heresy

A general understanding of ‘heresy’ is essential to exploring the specific correspondence among the QWH. As Russell states, ‘heresy is not an internally coherent concept, let alone movement, of its own.’¹¹⁵ The term heresy has come to encompass a striking number of different sects and beliefs stretching across hundreds of years of Christian history, making it a topic too large for this dissertation. Individual heresies can be grouped together based on their form and structure and the theological concepts inherent in these heresies.¹¹⁶ This categorization assists in identifying those heresies that have a higher degree of correspondence with Early Quakerism, and that may therefore be antecedents of Quakerism.

A substantial body of scholarly work treats the general topic of heresy, including the relationship of the various heresies to one another and to the Catholic Church, as well as their theological beliefs and their effect on European society. This scholarship includes works such as Russell’s *Dissent and Order in the Middle Ages*¹¹⁷, Lambert’s *Medieval Heresy*,¹¹⁸ Leff’s *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*¹¹⁹ and *Heresy, Philosophy and Religion in the Medieval West*,¹²⁰ Chadwick’s *Heresy and Orthodoxy in the Early Church*,¹²¹ and the recent

¹¹⁵ Russell, *Dissent and Order in the Middle Ages*, 4.

¹¹⁶ As done by Russell in the Introduction to *Dissent and Order in the Middle Ages*.

¹¹⁷ Russell, *Dissent and Order in the Middle Ages*.

¹¹⁸ Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*.

¹¹⁹

¹²⁰ Gordon Leff, *Heresy, Philosophy and Religion in the Medieval West* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing, 2002).

¹²¹ Henry Chadwick, *Heresy and Orthodoxy in the Early Church* (Brookfield, VT: Variorum, 1991).

*Heresy in Transition: Transforming Ideas of Heresy in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*¹²² by Hunter, Laursen, and Nederman.

Russell breaks down the various heresies of the medieval period into categories based on location, time of existence, theological practice, and social belief.¹²³ Although he makes clear that ‘these categories are intellectual constructs, abstractions,’ used to more easily explain a topic, he concludes that this categorization is useful when analyzing as large and diverse a topic as heresy.¹²⁴ Russell’s categories include Reform Heresies, Intellectual and Dualist Heresies, Spiritual and Apocalyptic Heresies, and Evangelical Heresies. Quakerism shared characteristics with many heresies, some more than others. However, the research for this dissertation shows that Quakerism has the most in common with those heresies that Russell labels as ‘Evangelical Heresies’—those originating with Wycliffe and Hus.¹²⁵ Reynolds, Ingle, and Spencer all speak of the Early Quakers as being distinguished by their enthusiastic responses to their radical theological beliefs, in the same way as the Evangelical Heresies.¹²⁶

As explained in Chapter 3, these Evangelical Heresies were the spiritual inheritors of John Wycliffe, an English dissenter who, as a professor at Oxford, was a prolific author of treatises outlining the reasoning behind his abandonment of the Catholic Church. At the heart of his argument was that those who were members of God’s ‘Elect’¹²⁷ could feel the real presence of God within them, thus removing the need for the outward church.¹²⁸ His

¹²² Ian Hunter, John C. Laursen, and Cary J. Nederman, *Heresy in Transition: Transforming Ideas of Heresy in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing, 2006).

¹²³ Russell, *Dissent and Order in the Middle Ages*, 2.

¹²⁴ Russell, *Dissent and Order in the Middle Ages*, 2.

¹²⁵ Russell, *Dissent and Order in the Middle Ages*, 80.

¹²⁶ See: Section 2.5.6.

¹²⁷ Those who would be saved during Christ’s return. See: Russell, *Dissent and Order in the Middle Ages*, 83-84.

¹²⁸ Russell, *Dissent and Order in the Middle Ages*, 84.

works inspired his fellow Englishman and others on the Continent, most importantly John Hus, to reject many of the teachings of the Catholic Church and search for their own path.

Ozment convincingly demonstrates that the Reformation does not begin with Martin Luther's posting of the 95 theses in 1517.¹²⁹ Rather, the events of the 1500s were the culmination of a centuries-old search for truth. In Ozment's account, the Reformation unfolded out of the Middle Ages, unlike the more traditional view, that treats the Reformation as a starting point for the development of the ideas and beliefs that rejected the teaching of the Catholic Church.¹³⁰ Ozment grounds Luther, Zwingli, Calvin, and Ignatius firmly in the tradition of medieval scholastic, mystic, and ecclesio-political thought, as well as Renaissance humanism.¹³¹ The conciliar movement is well documented by Ozment, as are the tensions between 'mystical' and 'scholastic' theology in the centuries immediately before the Reformation.¹³² He also explores popular movements, such as the *Devotio Moderna*, which sought to return the Catholic Church to the more simple foundations of the ancient Councils, Fathers, and Scriptures.¹³³ Ozment concludes that medieval 'heretics such as Jan Huss and John Wycliffe had little influence on the Reformers, with the exception of Martin Luther, who seems to have been conscious that his teachings were similar to those of some of the religious movements of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.'¹³⁴

Scholars such as Lambert,¹³⁵ Wakefield and Evans,¹³⁶ and Leff¹³⁷ allow for a more thorough examination of the QWH correspondence. These authors show from the writings

¹²⁹ Ozment, *The Age of Reform*.

¹³⁰ Ozment, *The Age of Reform*, 273.

¹³¹ Ozment, *The Age of Reform*, 260–264.

¹³² Ozment, *The Age of Reform*, 73–74.

¹³³ Ozment, *The Age of Reform*, 96–97.

¹³⁴ Ozment, *The Age of Reform*, 145.

¹³⁵ Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*.

¹³⁶ Walter L. Wakefield and Austin P. Evans, *Heresies of the High Middle Ages* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1991).

that have survived and been translated that Wycliffe and Hus exhibited disgust for the contemporary Established Churches. This led to their rejection of the church hierarchy and an effort revert to a more apostolic, evangelical, and spiritual community.¹³⁸ These scholars perceive a link among Wycliffe and Hus on a fundamental level, as revealed in the similarity of their theological beliefs and practices.¹³⁹

1.3.2.2. Wycliffe

For study of Wycliffe and the Lollards, the foremost authority (according to Russell and others)¹⁴⁰ is Hudson, whose works include *The Premature Reformation: Wycliffite Texts and Lollard History*,¹⁴¹ *Studies in the Transmission of Wycliffe's Writings*,¹⁴² and *Lollards and Their Books*.¹⁴³

Hudson focuses on the original texts of the Wycliffites, as opposed to the more readily accessible anti-Lollard Catholic records,¹⁴⁴ to present a picture of the Lollards' self-image.¹⁴⁵ She argues against those such as Poole and Vaughan who contend that the Lollards were 'anti-intellectual.'¹⁴⁶ Hudson shows instead that 'its theology was not a series of unrelated tenets, arbitrarily and unreasonably held by the ill-educated,'¹⁴⁷ but an intellectually rigorous system of beliefs. For Hudson, 'at the center was the primacy of Scripture from

¹³⁷ Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*.

¹³⁸ Russell, *Dissent and Order in the Middle Ages*, 12–22.

¹³⁹ Such as God's availability to all, the importance of the Bible, and the redefinition of the church as one of an elect group of spiritual equals without the need for a paid clergy, all of which are explored in this dissertation.

¹⁴⁰ Russell, *Dissent and Order in the Middle Ages*, 116.

¹⁴¹ Hudson, *The Premature Reformation*.

¹⁴² Anne Hudson, *Studies in the Transmission of Wyclif's Writings* (Cambridge, MA; Medieval Academy of America, *Speculum* 84, no. 3, 2009).

¹⁴³ Anne Hudson, *Lollards and Their Books* (London, UK: Hambledon Press, 1985).

¹⁴⁴ Although she used these records as well. Hudson, *The Premature Reformation*.

¹⁴⁵ Hudson, *The Premature Reformation*.

¹⁴⁶ Donald Dean Smeeton, review of *The Premature Reformation* by Anne Hudson from *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, Vol. 20, No. 3 (1989): 507, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2540813>. [accessed Jan. 23, 2012]

¹⁴⁷ Smeeton, review of *The Premature Reformation*, 507.

which sprang their objections to so many of the ecclesiastical rites.’¹⁴⁸ She notes ‘both sexes were allowed leadership opportunities—a practice that drew scorn from their opponents.’¹⁴⁹ Hudson’s reliance on the Lollards’ own writings results in a more nuanced and complete understanding of the Lollard movement than that coming from prior scholarship.

Hudson also explores how Wycliffe’s ideas caused major upheaval both in the country of his birth and in Bohemia, affecting theological, ecclesiastical, and political developments from the late 14th to the early 16th centuries.¹⁵⁰ Some of those ideas were transmitted orally through Wycliffe’s teaching at Oxford, and through his preaching in London and Lutterworth, but the main medium for the dissemination of his message was the written word, using Latin.¹⁵¹ The papers in Hudson’s collection examine aspects of that dissemination, including the organization and revision of Wycliffe’s works to form a summation of his ideas, the techniques devised to identify and make accessible his writings, the attempts of the orthodox clerical establishment to destroy those writings, and the fortunes of his texts during the Reformation period.¹⁵² Hudson considers manuscripts written in England and those copied abroad, mostly in Bohemia.¹⁵³ Although most of the papers have been published previously, this collection includes a new edition of the important Hussite catalogue of Wycliffe’s writings and, in three extended sections, Hudson contributes new material and additions and corrections to previous listings of Wycliffe’s manuscripts.¹⁵⁴

In an anthology of modern scholars’ works, Summerset, Havens, and Pitard gather works that portray the diversity of opinion regarding the Wycliffites and their influence on

¹⁴⁸ Smeeton, review of *The Premature Reformation*, 507.

¹⁴⁹ Smeeton, review of *The Premature Reformation*, 507.

¹⁵⁰ Hudson, *Studies in the Transmission of Wycliffe’s Writings*.

¹⁵¹ Hudson, *Studies in the Transmission of Wycliffe’s Writings*.

¹⁵² Hudson, *Studies in the Transmission of Wycliffe’s Writings* 140-143, 338.

¹⁵³ Hudson, *Studies in the Transmission of Wycliffe’s Writings* 152-153.

¹⁵⁴ Hudson, *Studies in the Transmission of Wycliffe’s Writings* 128.

their contemporary and future societies.¹⁵⁵ These authors take differing approaches to understanding the Lollards, thereby presenting a multifaceted understanding of the Lollard movement.

Aston's work¹⁵⁶ collects 25 years of research into the Lollards and their world. Her 'work has been influenced more by the psychology of learning and communication than the sociology of group identification,'¹⁵⁷ meaning she focuses more on where and how Lollard ideas were transmitted and less on how the Lollards identified themselves. She also examines the absence of a unified Lollard voice, which reflects the Lollards' openness to a diversity of opinion. Aston also explores the difficulties of promoting a scripturally based form of worship to a mostly 'illiterate laity aurally and visually,'¹⁵⁸ particularly as Wycliffe and many other prominent Lollards attacked the use of imagery within traditional services. Aston's focus on how Lollard ideas were transmitted helps inform the effect that Wycliffe and the Lollards had on their society and on later groups.

Deanesly examines how Wycliffe translated and disseminated an English version of the Bible.¹⁵⁹ She outlines the reasons the Catholic Church worked to maintain its hold on translation and why the church hierarchy attempted to prevent personal scriptural study by the laity.¹⁶⁰ Deanesly examines the extent of Bible reading in medieval England and, in particular, the role played by the Lollard translations. Through a study of wills, library

¹⁵⁵ Fiona Somerset, Jill C. Havens, and Derrick G. Pitard. *Lollards and their Influence in Late Medieval Society*. The contributors to this work include: David Aers, Margret Aston, Helen Barr, Mishtooni Bose, Lawrence M. Clopper, Andrew Cole, Ralph Hanna III, Maureen Jurkowski, Andrew Larson, Geoffrey H. Martin, Wendy Scase, Fiona Somerset, and Emily Steiner.

¹⁵⁶ Aston, *Lollards and Reformers*.

¹⁵⁷ G.L. Harriss, review of *Lollards and Reformers* by Margaret Aston in *The English Historical Review*, Vol. 102, No. 403 (1987): 475–476, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/572322>. [accessed Jan. 23, 2012]

¹⁵⁸ Harriss, review of *Lollards and Reformers*.

¹⁵⁹ Margaret Deanesly, *The Lollard Bible and Other Medieval Biblical Versions* (Cambridge, UK: The University Press, 1920); and Margaret Deanesly, *The Significance of the Lollard Bible*. The Ethel M. Wood Lecture delivered before the University of London on 12 March, 1951. London, UK: Athlone Press, 1951, 23.

¹⁶⁰ Deanesly, *The Lollard Bible and Other Medieval Biblical Versions*.

catalogues, and episcopal registers, where the existence of translations might be noted, Deanesly concludes that mystical writings in English were far more widely read than the Bible.

Lutton explores the interplay between the Lollards and the Established Church, focusing on the notion of Piety.¹⁶¹ He takes issue with portrayals of orthodox religion as buoyant and harmonious, showing that there was a diversity of opinion amongst a large segment of the population.¹⁶²

For a short, easily understood outline of Wycliffe—his life, theology, relationship to the Lollards, and historical impact—Anne Hudson and Anthony Kenny’s article on John Wycliffe in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* is helpful and provides a detailed bibliography.¹⁶³

Rex’s *The Lollards*¹⁶⁴ is an excellent work on the Lollards, covering Wycliffe’s antecedents,¹⁶⁵ his career,¹⁶⁶ and his role in the formation of the Lollards.¹⁶⁷ Rex also has a detailed history of the movement itself, starting during its early period,¹⁶⁸ its survival,¹⁶⁹ and finally its effects on English Protestantism.¹⁷⁰ Rex’s work is well-referenced and balanced, focusing on the general study of Wycliffe and Lollardy without having an apparent agenda.

¹⁶¹ Robert Lutton, *Lollardy and Orthodox Religion in Pre-Reformation England* (Suffolk, UK: Boydell Press, 2006).

¹⁶² Lutton, *Lollardy and Orthodox Religion in Pre-Reformation England*.

¹⁶³ Anne Hudson, and Anthony Kenny ‘Wyclif, John, (d.1384), first published 2004; online edn, Sept. 2010, 12552 words, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/30122>. [accessed Nov. 11, 2011]

¹⁶⁴ Richard Rex, *The Lollards* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave, 2002).

¹⁶⁵ Rex, *The Lollards*, 1–25.

¹⁶⁶ Rex, *The Lollards*, 25–52.

¹⁶⁷ Rex, *The Lollards*, 25–52.

¹⁶⁸ Rex, *The Lollards*, 54–87.

¹⁶⁹ Rex, *The Lollards*, 88–114.

¹⁷⁰ Rex, *The Lollards*, 115–150.

Workman examines Wycliffe's influences and his effect on the greater English church.¹⁷¹

Vaughan succinctly lays out Wycliffe's works, showing his theological development by outlining his work chronologically.¹⁷² The first part of Vaughan's work includes an outline of Wycliffe's life and impact, and the second part focuses on Wycliffe's theological beliefs as presented in his written works.

Poole's *Wycliffe and Movements for Reform* is an excellent description of Wycliffe's influence on the reform movements of both England and the Continent.¹⁷³ It outlines in detail the relationship between Wycliffe and Hus, as well as the effect they both had on the Reformation.

In terms of the place of women within Wycliffe's works as well as the Lollard movement as a whole, McSheffrey's, *Gender and Heresy: Women and Men in Lollard Communities, 1420–1530*¹⁷⁴ is an in-depth look at the differences in the reality versus the expressed views of Lollard movement. In her analysis, although Wycliffe and the Lollards expressed an ideal of spiritual equality for women, the reality was that they had fundamentally the same role as within the Catholic Church.¹⁷⁵

One work providing many articles regarding Wycliffe and the Lollards is *From Ockham to Wyclif*, edited by Anne Hudson and Michael Wilks.¹⁷⁶ This work provides articles on many relevant topics, including Wilks's 'Royal patronage and anti-papalism from Ockham

¹⁷¹ Herbert Workman, *John Wyclif: A Study of the English Medieval Church* (Hamden, CT: Archon Books, 1966).

¹⁷² Vaughan, *The Life and Opinions of John De Wycliffe*.

¹⁷³ Reginald Lane Poole, *Wycliffe and Movements for Reform* (UK: Gardners Books, 2007).

¹⁷⁴ Shannon McSheffrey, *Gender and Heresy: Women and Men in Lollard Communities, 1420–1530* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Penn Press, 1995).

¹⁷⁵ McSheffrey, *Gender and Heresy*.

¹⁷⁶ *From Ockham to Wyclif, Studies in Church History, Subsidia 5*. ed. by Anne Hudson and Michael Wilks (Oxford, UK: B. Blackwell, 1989).

to Wyclif.¹⁷⁷ This work provides a comprehensive collection of modern scholarship, starting by examining William of Ockham's philosophical and theological writings, his career, and his influence. This is then followed by a reassessment of Wycliffe's writings and major topics in his philosophy and theology.

1.3.2.3. Hus

Mathew Spinka's work, including; *John Hus: A Biography*¹⁷⁸, *John Hus: His Concept of the Church*¹⁷⁹ and his translation of his letters¹⁸⁰ provides a useful starting point for investigating John Hus and the Hussites. Spinka investigates Hus' actions, their motivations, and their effects. Spinka 'has drawn together much information that [had] never been available in English before,'¹⁸¹ having done much of his research in his native Czech. His *Biography* was the first of Hus in English since 1915,¹⁸² and with *John Hus: His Concept of the Church*, has provided the basis for much of the current scholarship of Hus.

Howard Kaminsky argues that the Hussite 'heresy' and the revolt in Bohemia were closely tied together.¹⁸³ He explores the spiritual and political implications of the Hussite movement, and his work is a 'fascinating ideological and sociological analysis of Hussite history seen as a movement of reformation and revolution. Kaminsky sees the two as

¹⁷⁷ Michael J. Wilks, 'Royal patronage and anti-papalism from Ockham to Wyclif', in *From Ockham to Wyclif*, ed. Anne Hudson and Michael Wilks (Oxford, 1989), 35–163.

¹⁷⁸ Spinka, *John Hus: A Biography*

¹⁷⁹ Matthew Spinka, *John Hus' Concept of the Church* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1966).

¹⁸⁰ John Hus, *The Letters of John Hus*, trans. Matthew Spinka (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 1972).

¹⁸¹ Pelikan J. Jaroslav, review of *John Hus: A Biography* by Matthew Spinka in *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 75, No. 5 (1970): 1487–1488, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1844569>. [accessed Jan. 23, 2012]

¹⁸² Spinka, *John Hus: A Biography*, Introduction.

¹⁸³ Howard Kaminsky, *A History of the Hussite Revolution* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2004).

intimately tied together.’¹⁸⁴ Kaminsky focuses on the sociological effect and implications of the Hussite movement, and his work assists in understanding the social milieu in which Hus operated.

Fudge’s work has also expanded Hussite studies.¹⁸⁵ Fudge undertakes a complete reexamination of how the Hussite movement should be viewed,¹⁸⁶ exploring the social and religious issues that underlie the movement. He argues that the Hussite movement was a ““revolutionary reformation movement”...which cannot be properly understood as a new version of prior movements like Waldensianism and Lollardy, or as a forerunner of the Protestant Reformation, but should be seen “both as reformation and popular religion” in its own right.’¹⁸⁷ This work presents several interesting points, but at least one reviewer has observed that, ultimately, his reexamination does not prove Fudge’s dissertation.¹⁸⁸ One implication of this view of Fudge’s work is that there ‘has yet to be a definitive history written in a major language either of the Hussite movement generally or the crusade specifically.’¹⁸⁹

Fudge also presents more than 200 translations of Hussite texts into English.¹⁹⁰ These texts illuminate the Hussite cause and the response of the orthodox authorities. This collection is valuable as it provides the only English translations of most of these primary-source materials.

¹⁸⁴ Marianka Fousek, review of *A History of the Hussite Revolution* by Howard Kaminsky in *Slavic Review*, Vol. 29, No. 3 (1970): 502–503, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2493165>. [accessed Jan. 23, 2012]

¹⁸⁵ Thomas A. Fudge, *The Magnificent Ride: The First Reformation in Hussite Bohemia*, (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing, 1998).

¹⁸⁶ Howard Kaminsky, review of *The Magnificent Ride* by Thomas A. Fudge in *Speculum*, Vol. 75, No. 2 (2000): 461–464, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2887602>. [accessed Jan. 23, 2012]

¹⁸⁷ Kaminsky, review of *The Magnificent Ride*.

¹⁸⁸ Kaminsky, review of *The Magnificent Ride*.

¹⁸⁹ Thomas A. Fudge, *The Crusade against Heretics in Bohemia, 1418–1437* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing, 2002), 12.

¹⁹⁰ Fudge, *The Crusade against Heretics in Bohemia, 1418–1437*, 12.

Loserth, who was member of the Wycliffe Society, which disseminated Wycliffe's works, published the first serious scholarly work comparing Hus and Wycliffe.¹⁹¹ This work became the standard from which much future scholarship was derived. Similarly, Schaff did much early research into Hus that laid the foundation for future scholarship.¹⁹² He also produced an excellent translation and analysis of Hus' *De Ecclesia*.¹⁹³

In regards to Hus, Hussites, and the role of women, Klassen's *Warring Maidens, Captive Wives and Hussite Queens: Women and Men at War and at Peace in Fifteenth Century Bohemia*¹⁹⁴ provides a detailed study of the role women were expected to play in the Established Church, the role women played in Hus' theology, and their position within the larger Hussite movement.

1.4. Primary Sources

The primary sources for this dissertation are those dealing directly with: (a) Wycliffe, (b) Hus, and (c) Early Quaker writings. Below is a discussion of these primary sources, including translations for the works of Wycliffe and Hus and the difficulties in working with those translations.

1.4.1. Wycliffe

Many of Wycliffe's works were not originally in written form, instead being post-delivery reproductions of his lectures and sermons.¹⁹⁵ These led inevitably to variations in

¹⁹¹ Johann Loserth, *Wiclif and Hus* trans. by M.J. Evans (London, UK: Hodder and Stoughton, 1884).

¹⁹² David S. Schaff, *John Huss: His Life, Teachings And Death After Five Hundred Years* (New York, NY: Scribner's, 1915).

¹⁹³ Jan Hus, *De Ecclesia: The Church*, trans. David Schaff (New York, NY: C. Scribner's Sons, 1915).

¹⁹⁴ John M. Klassen, *Warring Maidens, Captive Wives and Hussite Queens: Women and Men at War and at Peace in Fifteenth Century Bohemia* (Boulder, CO: East European Monographs, 1999).

¹⁹⁵ Poole, *Wycliffe and Movements for Reform*, 86.

the text from the original, sometimes caused by copying from memory¹⁹⁶ or from two different individuals' recollections.¹⁹⁷ Poole describes the effect of this fact:

Wycliffe's writings are principally lectures, sermons, and short tracts written for special occasions. With Wycliffe's exception of two works written in the form of dialogue, there is not one of his productions of any considerable length that can be shown to have been originally written in the shape in which we have it, that is to say, as an independent literary composition. So far as they have been published, all the books that make up his *Summa*—many of which form substantial volumes when printed—were written as lectures, some perhaps in part as sermons; and sometimes they include shorter tracts which originally stood by themselves. Wycliffe wrote as the occasion required, and put together what materials he had ready to hand quite without regard to literary exigencies. Hence it is natural that his writings should be full of repetitions, should cover the same ground more than once, and should be generally defective in arrangement. But this is only true when we look at them as complete books: their separate parts are severely drawn up according to logical rules, coordinated and subdivided in manifold-wise according to the taste of the schools.¹⁹⁸

Moreover, Wycliffe's works were originally written in Latin, because they were intended for the clergy.¹⁹⁹ Many of Wycliffe's works were not translated until the early 19th century, when Loserth and Poole, as members of the Wycliffe Society, began a systematic translation and publication of Wycliffe's works into English.²⁰⁰ As Loserth notes, writing in 1870, 'a very small portion of Wiclif's works is as yet printed,'²⁰¹ meaning that most scholars who cannot read Latin have a limited number of translations available to them.

Hudson is the editor of the five-volume set *English Wycliffite Sermons*. The works found in this volume are collected post-delivery, and 'these writings, illustrating a broad spectrum of Wycliffite ideas and attitudes, were drawn from a wide range of sources,

¹⁹⁶ Poole, *Wycliffe and Movements for Reform*, 86.

¹⁹⁷ As was the case with the work *De Compositione Hominis*, in Poole, *Wycliffe and Movements for Reform*, 86.

¹⁹⁸ Poole, *Wycliffe and Movements for Reform*, 84.

¹⁹⁹ Poole, *Wycliffe and Movements for Reform*, 86.

²⁰⁰ Poole, *Wycliffe and Movements for Reform*, 86.

²⁰¹ Loserth, *Wiclif and Hus.*, trans. M.J. Evans, xvii.

including a great cycle of Lollard sermons,' helping to illustrate what exactly Wycliffe said.²⁰²

Cigman's *Lollard Sermons* is another important collection of sermons given by Lollard-leaning priests in the late 14th and early 15th century.²⁰³ These sermons explicate the theology of the Lollards, because these were the actual sermons on the gospels given to the masses.²⁰⁴ They are thus helpful in drawing comparisons among the Lollards, the Early Quakers, and the Hussites. Although not a perfect replication of what was said, they are still instructive in understanding the theology that Lollard preachers were expounding.

Translations now exist for all of Wycliffe's major works, including his *On Civil Lordship* (*De Civili Dominio*), *On the Church* (*De Ecclesia*, 1378), *De Veritate Sacrae Scripturae* (*The Truth of the Sacred Scripture*, 1378), *De Potestate Papae* (*The Role of the Clergy*, 1379), and *The Trialogus* (1382). Wycliffe's translated works can also be found in many sources.²⁰⁵

1.4.2. Hus

Studying Hus' original works presents its own set of problems. Hus wrote in both Latin and his native Czech, depending on his audience. This again raises the issue of translations, because scholars who do not speak Czech or Latin are forced to rely on the

²⁰² John Frankis, review of *English Wycliffite Sermons* by Anne Hudson, *The Review of English Studies*, New Series, Vol. 36, No. 143 (1985): 404-406, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/516045>. [accessed Jan. 23, 2012]

²⁰³ Gloria Cigman, *Lollard Sermons* (Oxford, UK: Early English Text Society, 1989).

²⁰⁴ Cigman, *Lollard Sermons*, 13.

²⁰⁵ Willliell Thomson and Samuel Harrison Thomson, *The Latin Writings of John Wyclif: An Annotated Catalog* (Toronto, Canada: Pontifical Institute, 1983); John Wycliffe, *Tracts and Treatises of John de Wycliffe: With Selections and Translations from his Manuscripts and Latin Works*; ed. Richard Vaughan (London, UK: Blackburn and Pardon, 1845); *Select English Works of John Wyclif*; ed. Thomas Arnold (Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 1871). These works can all be found online at Google Books, where fully searchable photo-scans are available.

works of others. Hus' works, unlike Wycliffe's, were translated very soon after being written and were widely disseminated.²⁰⁶ As Estep concludes:

While Wycliffe's works are often ponderous, repetitive, and loaded with intricate theological arguments, Huss presents essentially the same concepts in a much more popular style along with pointed references to local events. This is one of the reasons why Huss's works early found their way to print while Wycliffe's remained virtually unknown.²⁰⁷

Estep offers another explanation for this earlier impact of Hus: 'Very soon after the invention of the printing press, Huss's writings became well known through the new medium, while Wycliffe's remained in poorly transcribed manuscripts in university gathering dust,'²⁰⁸ which means that there are earlier dated translations of Hus' works into English from which scholars can work.

Hus also wrote many of his sermons post-delivery, from his notes and memory.²⁰⁹ In terms of primary sources, this means that they were not verbatim copies of what was said, having been edited before publication. Although historians are sure that the works are those of Hus, they conclude that they were not the sermons as read, but rather what Hus wanted the public to see.²¹⁰

Along with these issues, in the study of Hus there is often a geographical bias as to the researcher/translator's views of Hus and his works.²¹¹ Authors such as Schaff, Loserth, and Spinka all translated Hus' works, with their own interpretations and biases formed from their respective backgrounds.

²⁰⁶ Estep, *Renaissance and Reformation*, 73.

²⁰⁷ Estep, *Renaissance and Reformation*, 73.

²⁰⁸ Estep, *Renaissance and Reformation*, 68.

²⁰⁹ Estep, *Renaissance and Reformation*, 68.

²¹⁰ Estep, *Renaissance and Reformation*, 73.

²¹¹ As discussed in Section 3.7.

Translations of Hus' work include: *Commentary on the Sentences on Peter Lombard* (1407–1408), *Treatise on Indulgences* (1412), and *De Ecclesia* (1413). This covers his major works as well as personal letters.

Translations of Hus' major works are generally available. Earlier versions, such as those by Schaff²¹² and Workman,²¹³ are available online at Google Books. Mathew Spinka's work *The Letters of John Hus*²¹⁴ is available at Haverford College, where the author of this dissertation obtained them. Thomas Fudge's work *The Crusade against Heretics in Bohemia, 1418–1437*²¹⁵ includes primary documents dealing with the crusade against the Hussites, providing evidence of Hus' theological effect and its transformation by the larger Hussite movement.

1.4.3. Early Quakers

The Early Quakers were prolific writers and publishers. Their works included pamphlets and tracts for public consumption outside the community. Fox, Nayler, Fell, and Burrough, as well as others,²¹⁶ all authored works of these types. Some were printed to expound Quaker theology,²¹⁷ some as examples of Quaker suffering,²¹⁸ and some were responses to attacks on Quakers by others.²¹⁹ By the second generation of Quakers, authors such as Penn²²⁰ and Barclay²²¹ were able to draw together several society-wide

²¹² Hus, *De Ecclesia*, 16.

²¹³ Workman, *John Wyclif: A Study of the English Medieval Church*.

²¹⁴ Hus, *The Letters of John Hus*, trans. Matthew Spinka.

²¹⁵ Fudge, *The Crusade against Heretics in Bohemia, 1418–1437*.

²¹⁶ See: Barbour and Roberts, *Early Quaker Writings*; and Moore, Appendix I 'Sources of Information on Early Quakerism,' in *The Light in Their Consciences*.

²¹⁷ See: Barbour and Roberts, 'Part C, The Truth Defended,' in *Early Quaker Writings*, 243–314.

²¹⁸ Barbour and Roberts, 'Part A, Tract 9, Quaker Martyrology,' in *Early Quaker Writings*, 102–139.

²¹⁹ Barbour and Roberts, 'Part C, The Truth Defended,' in *Early Quaker Writings*, 243–314.

²²⁰ William Penn, *Primitive Christianity Revived: In the Faith and Practice of the People Called Quakers*, (Philadelphia, PA: Miller and Burlock, 1857).

²²¹ Barclay, *An Apology for the True Christian Divinity*.

characteristics in printed works that explained each author's views of the fundamental beliefs and characteristics of Quakerism.

Published works include one of the best-known of the Early Quaker writings, George Fox's *Journal*, which, although originally written for private use, was heavily edited by the publishers before being released.²²² First published through a bequest in Fox's will, the *Journal* was printed in early 1694, shortly after his death.²²³ The editing of this work is problematic, because it means that the final product has been distorted to fit the editors' views.²²⁴ As seen with Fox's *Journal*:

When in August [1694] the central meeting in London received word of possible exaggeration in a passage they printed a substitute leaf to be inserted into all undistributed copies, and they tried to insert it in distributed copies, particularly those in university libraries at Oxford and Cambridge. To judge from dozens of copies I [Cadbury] have seen, they succeeded more often than failed.²²⁵

Cadbury explains how this editing of the *Journal* was observed and commented upon by one of Fox's greatest detractors, Francis Bugg.²²⁶ As an ex-Quaker who was personally acquainted with Fox and other Quaker leaders, Bugg felt he had firsthand knowledge of the Fox's character, writing, and style. Bugg:

Was suspicious of the printed *Journal* partly because of its excellence of style. Bugg knew the Fox's original style was not polished, just as his handwriting crude... Bugg was justified in suspecting that the *Journal* as printed had been edited and corrected; it was common knowledge that thirteen Friends had been entrusted with the task.²²⁷

²²² Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 229–230.

²²³ Henry J. Cadbury, 'Introduction,' in *Journal of George Fox* (Richmond, IN: Friends United Press, 1908, reprinted 1976), 4.

²²⁴ Cadbury, 'Introduction,' in *Journal of George Fox*, 3–4.

²²⁵ Cadbury, 'Introduction,' in *Journal of George Fox*, 3.

²²⁶ Francis Bugg: A dissatisfied ex-Quaker critic who was one of leading critics of Early Quakerism and Fox in particular. See: Cadbury, 'Introduction,' in *Journal of George Fox*, 4.

²²⁷ Cadbury, 'Introduction,' in *Journal of George Fox*, 4.

Moore,²²⁸ Pilgrim,²²⁹ and Tarter²³⁰ have published research into the editing process undertaken by the central authorities.²³¹ Again, quoting Cadbury:

We now know that very few lines of Fox's *Journal* were written by him at all; most were dictated to others. We know that Thomas Ellwood and the rest of the editorial committee *did* smooth the written text; that was to be expected...²³²

Justified or not, this process was repeated with works by other Quakers, including Nayler, Fell, and Burrough.²³³ This extensive prepublication editing of works has led scholars such as Moore to argue that these works cannot be viewed as authoritative statements by the original authors, but rather express the views of the censors. Moore argues that works such as Fox's *Some Principles of the Elect People of God in Scorn Called Quakers* and the tracts used during public debates provide a more accurate portrayal of the Early Quakers.²³⁴ Although such radical editing may have been standard practice at the time, its effects were a more idealized representation of the subject matter, forcing the researcher to look to other sources (such as those of outsiders²³⁵ or unedited works²³⁶) to better understand what the works may have originally said.

A lesser known work, but for the purposes of this dissertation of great importance, is Fox's *Some Principles of the Elect People of God Who in Scorn are Called Quakers*,²³⁷ which was written in 1661. This work is divided into 38 sections, dealing with topics such as *The Church*, *The Gospels*, *Faith*, *The Scriptures*, and *The Ministry*. It even treats mundane

²²⁸ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 229–230.

²²⁹ Pilgrim, 'Taming Anarchy,' 211–214.

²³⁰ Tarter, 'Go North!' 91–93.

²³¹ Such as the Second-Day Morning Meeting and Meeting for Sufferings. See: Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 227–228.

²³² Cadbury, 'Introduction,' in *Journal of George Fox*, 4.

²³³ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 232.

²³⁴ Moore, 'Appendix I,' in *The Light in Their Consciences*, 229–235.

²³⁵ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 233–234.

²³⁶ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 233–234.

²³⁷ Fox, *Some Principles of the Elect People of God in Scorn Called Quakers*.

topics, such as *Good Manners* and *Days and Times*, and *Meats and Drinks*. This work, printed for one Robert Wilson,²³⁸ outlined the Early Quaker thinking on these topics, providing scriptural and real-world evidence for the arguments. It is a work written during a time of transition for the Early Quakers, and, when compared with later works, such as Barclay's *Apology* (written in 1678), it illuminates the differences between the first and second generations of Quakers.²³⁹

This work, unlike Fox's *Journal*, dealt with issues of the entire society, not just Fox's personal experience. It was meant to explain Quaker theology and practice in short, concise points backed up with the scriptural evidence. It was written specifically to be published and distributed, unlike the *Journal*, which was dictated over long periods of time to various people.²⁴⁰ Finally, unlike the *Journal*, this work was not heavily edited, instead being written and immediately printed. *Some Principles* acts more like a snapshot of Fox's beliefs and the state of the Quaker movement in 1661 and, unlike the heavily edited *Journal*, provides an expression of how Fox and the Early Quakers sought to shape the movement in the early days, before events caused changes and compromises to be made.²⁴¹

Two other works, Nayler's *Love to the Lost*²⁴² and Burrough's *Declaration of Faith*,²⁴³ help complete the portrait of Early Quaker beliefs. These two works, printed in the 1650s, help to illustrate the beliefs that the Early Quakers held, as opposed to Fox and Barclay's work, which were proscriptions on what the Early Quakers should believe. These

²³⁸ Fox, 'Cover,' in *Some Principles of the Elect People of God in Scorn Called Quakers*.

²³⁹ For a more detailed discussion of these differences, See: Section 2.3.1.

²⁴⁰ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 229–230.

²⁴¹ See: Section 2.3.1.

²⁴² James Nayler, *Love to the Lost*. (London, UK: Printed for Giles Calvert, at the Black-spread-Eagle, 1656.)

²⁴³ Edward Burrough, *Declaration of Faith*. (London UK: Printed for Thomas Simmons, 1657)

works, when examined together, provide a picture of what the Early Quakers believed within the movement, as well as those beliefs which they wanted to portray to the general public.

Other examples of the works of Early Quakers intended for public consumption were theological debates conducted through the use of printed pamphlets and tracts. These debates, such as those between Bunyan and Burrough²⁴⁴ and Nayler and Baxter,²⁴⁵ highlighted what the Early Quakers believed and what they rejected from other sects, explaining their reasoning and attacking their opponents' beliefs and practices.²⁴⁶ These tracts caused much scandal²⁴⁷ and were partially responsible for the feeling of a need for more centralized control of the Quaker movement.²⁴⁸

Other primary source works are those intended for intercommunity communication. These include letters from one Quaker to another, such as those between the Valiant Sixty and Margaret Fell,²⁴⁹ Meeting for Worship minutes (including those of the Meeting for Business, Second-Day Morning Meeting, etc.),²⁵⁰ and epistles from the central leadership in London to the various local meetings (such as those used during Fox's Gospel Ordering).²⁵¹ These works aid in understanding the increasing conformity that was imposed on the Early Quaker movement by the centralized authorities in London.

The Early Quakers placed women and men on equal spiritual and social footing, as best exemplified by Margaret Fell.²⁵² Many of her works exist, both those for public and for

²⁴⁴ See: Kuenning, Larry, ed., 'The Pamphlet Debate between John Bunyan and Edward Burrough, 1656–57' Quaker Heritage Press Website <http://www.qhpress.org/texts/bvb/index.html>. [accessed Jan. 23, 2012]

²⁴⁵ Barbour and Roberts, 'Part C,' in *Early Quaker Writings*, 263–298.

²⁴⁶ Barbour and Roberts, 'Part C, Introduction,' in *Early Quaker Writings*, 294.

²⁴⁷ Barbour and Roberts, 'Part C, Introduction,' in *Early Quaker Writings*, 294.

²⁴⁸ Moore, Chapter 7 'Heated Controversy,' in *The Light in Their Consciences*, 88–97.

²⁴⁹ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 231–233.

²⁵⁰ Tarter, 'Go North!' 90–91.

²⁵¹ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 230.

²⁵² See: Section 2.5.9.2.

private consumption, with scholarship from Ross²⁵³ and Kunze²⁵⁴ greatly expanding our understanding of her role in the early movement. The most recent work on Fell is by Sally Bruyneel, titled *Margaret Fell and the End of Time: The Theology of the Mother of Quakerism*.²⁵⁵ This work focuses on Fell's theological contribution to the Early Quaker movement by analyzing her letters and writings. Letters to and from Fell, dating to the Lambs' War and continuing to her death, reveal a woman who was sought out for advice, support, and fellowship by many leaders of the Early Quaker movement.²⁵⁶ Her public works such as *A True Testimony From the People of God*,²⁵⁷ and *A Declaration and an Information From us the People of God Called Quakers*,²⁵⁸ sought to explain and justify the Early Quaker experience to larger, public audience. Other works such as *Women's Speaking: Justified, Proved, and Allowed of by the Scriptures*,²⁵⁹ focused on the role women should play within the spiritual community.²⁶⁰

Finally, Early Quaker primary sources include those works that were originally intended for private use, such as unedited diaries. These writings provide insight into the thinking and motivations for the Early Quakers and illuminate the internal struggle many

²⁵³ Isabel Ross, *Margaret Fell: Mother of Quakerism* (London, UK: Longmans, 1949).

²⁵⁴ Bonnelyn Young Kunze, *Margaret Fell and the Rise of Quakerism* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1994).

²⁵⁵ Sally Bruyneel, *Margaret Fell and the End of Time: The Theology of the Mother of Quakerism*, (Baylor, TX: Baylor University Press, 2010).

²⁵⁶ Margaret Fell, *Undaunted Zeal: The Letters of Margaret Fell*, ed. Elsa F. Glines, frwd. R. Moore (Richmond, IN: Friends United Press, 2003).

²⁵⁷ Margaret Fell, *A True Testimony From the People of God: (Who by the world are called Quakers) of the Doctrines of the Prophets, Christ, and the Apostles, which is witnessed unto, by them who are now raised up by the same Power, and quickned by the same Spirit and Blood of the Everlasting Covenant, which brought again our Lord Jesus from the dead.* (London, UK: Printed for Robert Wilson, 1660)

²⁵⁸ Margaret Fell, *A Declaration and an Information From us the People of God Called Quakers, To the present Governors, the King and Both Houses of Parliament, And all whom it may Concern.* (London, UK: Printed for Thomas Simmons and Robert Wilson, 1660)

²⁵⁹ Margaret Fell, *Women's Speaking: Justified, Proved, and Allowed of by the Scriptures, All such as speak by the Spirit and Power of the Lord Jesus. And how Women were the first that Preached the Tidings of the Resurrection of Jesus, and were sent by Christ's own Command, before he Ascended to the Father, John 20. 17.* (London, UK: Unknown, 1666)

²⁶⁰ Fell, 'Women's Speaking,' 2.

endured prior to their conviction.²⁶¹ These works were preserved by individuals and families, often being collected and donated to institutions such as Haverford and Swarthmore Colleges and Emory University. Some were printed, although without the heavy hand of the editors of works such as Fox's *Journal*.²⁶² These works help to show what motivated these individuals to gather together in a communal spiritual journey.

Many of these primary sources are collected in *Early Quaker Writings*, edited and with commentary by Hugh Barbour and Arthur O. Roberts.²⁶³ This work provides an extensive compendium of the different types of works produced by the Early Quaker movement. Another valuable source is *Hidden in Plain Sight: Quaker Women's Writings 1650–1700*,²⁶⁴ a collection of Early Quaker women's writings with analysis by the editor. Earlham School of Religion's online Digital Collection provides easy, online access to a significant number of Early Quaker tracts and writings.

Because this dissertation deals with the period before 1678, the important primary source tracts are those subject to the least amount of censorship. By 1678, an increased amount of centralized authority was exerted on the Quaker movement in the form of Fox's 'Gospel Ordering',²⁶⁵ meaning that works such as his *Journal*, Barclay's *Apology*, and *Epistles* from the SDMM, although useful for identifying the public persona expressed by the second generation of Quakers, do not represent the full panoply of beliefs existing within the early Quaker movement. Works such as Fox's *Some Principles*, letters between Quakers, and the tracts used during the various debates with outsiders give a more complete, if less

²⁶¹ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 233-234.

²⁶² Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 229-230.

²⁶³ Barbour and Roberts, *Early Quaker Writings*.

²⁶⁴ Mary Garman, Judith Applegate, Margaret Benefiel, Dortha Meredith, eds., *Hidden In Plain Sight: Quaker Women's Writings, 1650–1700* (Wallingford, PA: Pendle Hill Press, 1996).

²⁶⁵ See: Section 2.5.3.

polished, view of the Early Quaker movement. These are among the works that form the basis for defining the period of the Early Quakers in this dissertation.

1.5. Introduction to the Early Quakers, Heresy in General, and Wycliffe and Hus

This dissertation focuses on three religious experiences: those of the Early Quakers, of John Wycliffe, and of John Hus, collectively referred to as the QWH. The discussion below introduces these experiences and defines terms that will be used throughout the dissertation.

1.5.1. Early Quakers

Many peculiar traits of Quakerism today have a long lineage, often dating back to those first ‘convinced’ as Friends. The precepts that have become Quaker testimonies, such as those on simplicity or peace, are a modern-day interpretation of the very earliest Quaker leadings on how to ‘live in the Light.’²⁶⁶ Some traits, such as abstaining from oaths or the use of simple language, have been adapted by successive generations of Quakers in reaction to changes in society around them. Other traits that were lightning-rod issues at the very beginning of Quakerism, such as their abhorrence of the tithing system of the Anglican Church, have fallen out of Quaker thought, because those issues became less important in society as a whole.²⁶⁷

Quakers have often stood on the fringe of society, living a life that was slightly ‘out of step’ with the rest of their world. Their stance against slavery arose well in advance of much

²⁶⁶ ‘Walking in the Light’ was Early Quaker terminology for the right form of conduct and has to do with both a) obeying those decisions come to by the corporate worship of Quakerism and b) following the ‘inward light’ as it led you. See: Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 115-129.

²⁶⁷ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 65-66, 117-118.

of the Western world.²⁶⁸ The social campaigns of subsequent generations of Quakers, such as those for women's suffrage, often led them to persecutions as terrible as those suffered by the unfortunate Early Quakers who were jailed.²⁶⁹ The belief in the need for respectful treatment of prisoners and the mentally challenged, 'green' Quakerism, and opposition to war are among the causes taken up by Quakers that, although initially standing in opposition to mainstream culture, were eventually accepted by many non-Quakers as the correct path for society to take.

From the start, the Early Quakers were persecuted for believing in doctrines different from the Puritans and Anglican Church, as well as for holding radical political ideas. The Early Quakers responded to this persecution by reexamining their beliefs and practices in an attempt to become more cohesive and unified. Once this was achieved, they then attempted to justify their theological and political ideas to the rest of English society. This striving for unity and justification is the catalyst for a change in Quaker society as a whole, and once achieved, differentiates Early Quakers and those of the later, more 'quietist' period.

In this dissertation, 'Early Quakers' refers to the period from 1647 to 1678. As shown in the work of Gwyn²⁷⁰ and Moore,²⁷¹ 1647 represents a starting point, because it was in this year that George Fox, according to his *Journal*, had his foundational spiritual experience and started preaching to the various Seekers, Baptists, Levellers, and other dissident groups of the English Civil War period.²⁷² The choice of 1678 as the end date is more controversial, but the basis for this decision is that this is the year in which a series of reforms intended to bring

²⁶⁸ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 214–228.

²⁶⁹ The effects of external pressure and persecution on the Early Quaker movement is more fully discussed in Chapter 2 of this dissertation.

²⁷⁰ Gwyn, *Apocalypse of the Word*.

²⁷¹ Moore, Chapter 17, 'Metamorphosis,' in *The Light in Their Consciences* 214–228.

²⁷² Fox, *Journal of George Fox*, 34.

unity to the Quakers reached full flower, resulting in a centralized authority to suppress the diversity of thought and belief that characterized the Early Quakers.²⁷³

The effects of these reforms are reflected in two centuries of Quaker history. Once the controls effected by Fox and the leadership of the Quakers were in place, the movement took on a more well-defined and static form.²⁷⁴ The reforms led to a drawing together of the Society in seeming unity. However, this was accomplished at a price. Quakers in the next two centuries suffered a number of schisms, many of which occurred over subtle differences in faith or practice.²⁷⁵ These differences arose, in part, because the reforms prevented ‘heretical’ ideas from coexisting in one body. The practice of disowning fringe ideas led Quakers to break into factions, a practice that can be traced back to the reordering of Quakerism in the 1650’s.²⁷⁶ Although the centralization of the Quaker society had many benefits, they came at the cost of no longer embracing differing beliefs.

1.5.2. Heresy

Heresy is defined as a belief that stands in opposition, whether directly or indirectly, to established Church orthodoxy, and therefore stands outside the traditional Church.²⁷⁷ As Leff states:

Heresy is defined by reference to orthodoxy. It does not exist alone. A doctrine or a sect or an individual becomes heretical when condemned as such by the church. For this, there has to be a body of accepted beliefs to violate and a recognized authority to enforce it. In their absence, to profess even the most outrageous opinions is to operate in a doctrinal-as opposed to a moral or a legal- vacuum; the community may be

²⁷³ See: Section 2.5.3.

²⁷⁴ Tarter, ‘Go North!’ 91–93; Pilgrim, ‘Taming Anarchy,’ 212–215; and Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 225–228.

²⁷⁵ Schisms in Quakerism included the Hicksite/Orthodox split in 1827 and the Gurneyite/Wilburite split in 1843; Spencer, ‘Holiness: the Quaker Way to Perfection,’ 168.

²⁷⁶ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 11.

²⁷⁷ John A. Parratt, *Guide to Doing Theology*, (London, UK: SPCK, 1996), 38.

scandalized; the law may be broken; but there will be no officially constituted outlook against which they offend.²⁷⁸

So, as the above states, by definition heresy cannot exist without an orthodox 'body of accepted beliefs to violate.'²⁷⁹ The quote also shows that 'heresy was a deviation from accepted beliefs rather than something alien to them: it sprang from believing differently about the same things as opposed to holding a different belief.'²⁸⁰

In this dissertation, 'heresy' is used to describe a difference in theology, dogma, or form of worship between some members of a church (as opposed to outsiders) and the hierarchy and orthodox authority of that church.²⁸¹ From the early medieval period through the times of the QWH, there was much less separation in the spheres of society into what was 'secular,' 'religious,' or 'political.' Instead, 'it was...the existence of such a prevailing orthodoxy, defined by the church and jointly enforced with the lay power, the distinguished medieval society.'²⁸² As a result, one who was a heretic in relation to religion also became a political 'heretic,' for they were strongly tied together. To be a heretic was 'to be excluded from society, which was by definition Christian, in its civil no less than its spiritual aspect.'²⁸³ And as Leff points out, 'in these conditions heresy was endemic, since to step outside the accepted framework was to be opposed to authority,'²⁸⁴ authority that had both spiritual and temporal powers.

²⁷⁸ Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, 1.

²⁷⁹ Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, 1.

²⁸⁰ Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, 2.

²⁸¹ This encompasses the notion that there are heretics not only in the Roman Catholic Church, but also in other Christian-based Protestant groups as well.

²⁸² Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, 1.

²⁸³ Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, 1.

²⁸⁴ Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, 1.

As Parratt describes, ‘Christian doctrine was in the early centuries thrashed out in the context of controversy.’²⁸⁵ Without an ‘other’ against which to define itself, the early church fathers would not have been able to set clear definitions of what it meant to be a ‘Christian.’ Otherness is vital in defining a group, because it gives something against which the group can be defined.²⁸⁶ The (perceived) presence of heresy gives both sides, orthodox and heretical, a chance to establish parameters, by defining what they ‘are not’ as opposed to what they ‘are.’ Consistent with this tenet, much of Early Quaker writing is dominated by ‘we do not do this’ or ‘we do not believe that,’ because this was a way to show people what the Quakers were by showing them what they were not. It is clear from Early Quaker writings that ‘in setting their position clearly, several early Friends felt led to summarize Quaker theological teachings, not as new, but as differing from accepted practice.’²⁸⁷

Medieval heresies arose for various reasons. Their dislocation from the orthodox side could be from an internal or external catalyst, but was inherently related to the system it set out to change. Thus, heresy must be examined in direct relationship to the orthodox world it is denying. It is true that ‘... all heresies necessarily breathe the air of the time in which they arise, and are necessarily a reflection of the philosophy of whatever [heretical] ideas are prevalent at the moment they arise,’²⁸⁸ and are a reflection of the society in which they were created. As Leff shows, ‘heresy during the Middle Ages was an indigenous growth...and it drew upon the common stock of religious concepts to implement it.’²⁸⁹

As individual heresies disappear, their effect on society can linger. If a heresy is defeated, it ‘does not mean that the general moral effect or atmosphere of the heresy

²⁸⁵ Parratt, *A Guide to Doing Theology*, 38.

²⁸⁶ Pilgrim, ‘Taming Anarchy,’ 212-213.

²⁸⁷ Barbour and Roberts, *Early Quaker Writings*, 246.

²⁸⁸ Belloc, *The Great Heresies*, 18.

²⁸⁹ Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, 2.

disappears from among men, but that its creative doctrines are no longer believed in, so that its vitality is lost, and must ultimately disappear... The doctrine is dead; its effects on society survive.'²⁹⁰ This dissertation examines the effects of heresy on society, and how those effects helped create an atmosphere for the development of Early Quakerism.

1.5.3. Heresy in the Late Medieval Period

The later medieval period is often referred to as the final period of the great heresies.²⁹¹ After the Reformation, Western Christendom was a fractured society; the notion of a unified Christian Europe no longer existed.²⁹² Instead, religion, which had been tied to politics since Constantine, had become linked to nationalism. The spirit of the Crusades had died; a united Western Europe based on the ties of the Catholic Church had been transformed into warring nations whose very identities were based on their religious convictions.²⁹³ Beliefs and ideas were restricted to the similar national and religious groupings. Thus, Protestant countries tended to influence and be influenced most by other Protestant countries, whereas countries in which Roman Catholicism remained the established church looked to Rome and other Catholic countries.²⁹⁴

This balkanization limited the ability of a single heresy to affect all of Western Christian society.²⁹⁵ Whereas, prior to the Reformation, a paradigm existed which allowed a heresy's effect to be felt by the whole of Western Christendom, the hostility between Catholics and Protestants after the Reformation limited the effect of a particular heresy on

²⁹⁰ Belloc, *The Great Heresies*, 6.

²⁹¹ Russell, *Dissent and Order in the Middle Ages*, 4.

²⁹² Russell, *Dissent and Order in the Middle Ages*, 13.

²⁹³ Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 167-168.

²⁹⁴ Russell, *Dissent and Order in the Middle Ages*, 13.

²⁹⁵ Ozment, *The Age of Reform*, 44.

other regions.²⁹⁶ Simply put, because the Catholic Church was no longer universal, heresy no longer had a universal effect.

Heresies during the time of Catholic religious hegemony frequently had a wide-ranging effect inside the Church, often producing significant changes even as the papacy attempted to eradicate them.²⁹⁷ For the Catholic Church, the first step in defeating a heresy was to define it by stating the church doctrines to which the heresy stood in opposition.²⁹⁸ By careful study of a heresy, the Catholic Church could define those aspects that caused the division from the rest of the church.²⁹⁹ Once a heresy was defined, the whole of the Catholic world would be informed as to its composition so as to be on guard against it, thus unintentionally disseminating a given heresy more widely.³⁰⁰ Finally, when a heresy was identified, a public trial was held to denounce the heresy and to provide a public demonstration to confirm for the population what they should *not* believe, but this also brought the heresy's ideas to the wider audience of the laity.³⁰¹ This process meant that a heresy's effect could range far beyond the region in which it arose, unintentionally spreading heretical ideas.

The later medieval period is the most interesting in terms of number, type, and impact of heretical sects. During this period, there are many examples of individuals and groups responding to the increased controls of the Catholic Church. Heresies could be found across the continent, forming and reforming as quickly as the papal authorities could stamp them

²⁹⁶ Malcolm Lambert, *Medieval Heresy: Popular Movements from the Gregorian Reform to the Reformation*, 3rd Edition. (Cambridge, MA: B. Blackwell, 2002), 221.

²⁹⁷ Russell, *Dissent and Order in the Middle Ages*, 15.

²⁹⁸ Ozment, *The Age of Reform*, 35.

²⁹⁹ Russell, *Dissent and Order in the Middle Ages*, 22–25. This process is evidenced by the fact that much primary source evidence dealing with heresies come from church records outlining the actions that the authorities took against the heresies.

³⁰⁰ Russell, *Dissent and Order in the Middle Ages*, 68–71.

³⁰¹ Belloc, *The Great Heresies*, 15.

out.³⁰² The ideas that were central to these heresies sowed the seeds of Reformation thought and created an atmosphere that allowed the Protestant churches to pull away from the control of the Catholic Church.³⁰³ The forces that gave form and function to the heresies of the past were thus funneled into the creation of Protestantism.

1.5.4. Wycliffe, Hus, and Their Correspondence with the Quakers

After examining many heresies, two stood out for this author as having a similarity of belief and practice, the teachings of Wycliffe and of Hus. Because of a similarity of both theological belief and practice to the Early Quakers, a correspondence between these three groups became evident. The insistence of Wycliffe and Hus on scriptural supremacy over church tradition, the return to a primitive church, and a ‘Holy Spirit’-infused spiritual community all were echoed in the Early Quakers. These characteristics point to a correspondence among the QWH, and are introduced below.

1. **Accessibility of Christ’s Message:** The QWH believed that Christ’s message was available to all, regardless of social position, education, or place of birth. The QWH believed membership in the Universal Church was open to any person who sought out Christ’s message in the Bible and accepted the Truth they found within.
2. **Two Separate Churches:** The QWH believed that there are two churches, the ‘visible’ church made up of practices, hierarchies, rules, and regulations, and the ‘invisible’ church made up of the true believers and followers of Christ’s message. The QWH believed that the ‘visible’ church was a hindrance to true salvation and believed themselves to be part of the ‘invisible’ church.

³⁰² Russell, *Dissent and Order in the Middle Ages*, 80.

³⁰³ Russell, *Dissent and Order in the Middle Ages*, 81.

3. **Authority of the Bible:** Wycliffe, Hus, and Fox all espoused a theology based on the belief in the final and unquestioned authority of the Bible over the Established Churches' rule of faith. They felt that the Established Churches had used human desires in the creation of their rule of faith at the expense of what was plainly said in the Bible. This tied specifically into their belief that each individual should be given the opportunity to read the Bible for themselves. It also tied into the above belief of a 'visible' and 'invisible' church. However, whereas Wycliffe and Hus believed in the absolute authority of the Bible in all aspects of life and faith, Fox and the Early Quakers believed in the primacy of the revelations illuminated by the Inward Light as the final authority.
4. **Personal Study of the Bible and Translation to the Vernacular:** For the authority of the Bible to be properly understood, the QWH promoted personal scriptural study, which could only be accomplished by translation into the vernacular. This is explicit in regards to Wycliffe and Hus, as it is clearly stated in their works.³⁰⁴ For the Early Quakers, the translation of the Bible was not an issue, but personal study was. This is clear in their liberal use of the Bible for imagery and language in their printed works, as justification in defense of their actions and as an expression of their faith in personal writings.³⁰⁵ Their use and reliance on the Bible is a clear indicator that they assumed some form of personal understanding of it.
5. **Opposition to Established Churches:** The QWH viewed the Established Churches as falling well short of the ideal laid out by Christ in the Bible and as a hindrance to the path to salvation. The QWH resisted clerical authority based on the belief that

³⁰⁴ See: Sections 3.2.4 and 3.3.4

³⁰⁵ See: Section 2.5.10.

spiritual roles were not to be assigned by an outside, central force, particularly one that, like the Established Churches, had become hopelessly corrupt.

6. **Return to ‘Primitive Church’:** The QWH attempted to return to the time of the Apostles, or Primitive Church. They sought to create a society of believers who were the ‘True Church,’ marked by their rejection of contemporary church hierarchy and dogmas. Their views of what constituted the primitive church were informed by their understanding of Biblical representations and, in the case of the Early Quakers, their understanding of it in relation to the Inward Light.
7. **Reforming Tendencies:** The QWH actively sought to reform the world around them, both socially and spiritually. This reforming tendency was motivated by the belief that the Established Church needed to return to its primitive roots. As stated above, these reforms extended beyond the Church to include larger society. Examples of this extension include Hus’ Czech nationalism³⁰⁶ and the Early Quaker focus on actions outside of the church.³⁰⁷
8. **Imminence of Christ’s Return:** Wycliffe and Hus believed that Christ’s return to Earth to save the faithful and punish the wicked was an imminent occurrence. They viewed it not at some distant future event, but as a reality coming within a generation or two, perhaps even within their own lifetime, lending a sense of urgency to preparing for that occurrence.³⁰⁸ The Early Quakers, as explained in Chapter 2, were founded during a time when most of society believed in Christ’s physical return as a coming temporal event, often related to the Civil War.³⁰⁹ This belief was modified by

³⁰⁶ See: Section 3.3.2.

³⁰⁷ See: Section 2.5.9.

³⁰⁸ Ozment, *The Age of Reform*, 192.

³⁰⁹ See: Section 2.5.4.

the events of the Restoration and subsequent suffering endured by the Early Quakers, leading to the adoption of the uniquely Quaker belief of ‘realized eschatology.’³¹⁰

9. **Role of Women:** To varying degrees, the QWH promoted an equality of the sexes, arguing the women had equal access to the ‘Holy Spirit’ and could therefore preach and be part of the spiritual community.

Chapter 4 of this dissertation will explore these characteristics, examining them to define the correspondence among Wycliffe, Hus, and the Quakers.

1.5.4.1. Why Wycliffe and Hus?

The author has chosen to focus on Wycliffe and Hus because their temporal proximity to the Early Quakers suggests a greater likelihood that the Early Quakers knew of their respective teachings and legacies. As will be demonstrated below, the Early Quakers used their understanding of Wycliffe and Hus, as presented in the *Book of Martyrs*, as a primary example of right belief as well as the defense of that belief in the face of persecution and suffering.³¹¹

Although there are many points of correspondence among QWH, some of these points are also shared by other medieval heretical sects. For example, the aim of shedding the trappings of the Established Churches and returning to a more ‘primitive’ form of the church, as represented by the Apostolic Era, was a key belief of many heretical sects in the medieval period. On the extreme end were Gnostic groups such as the Cathars, who espoused a hidden or secret form of Christian theology passed down from, and thus preserving, the traditions of

³¹⁰ See: Section 2.5.4.

³¹¹ See: Sections 3.6 and 3.7.

a ‘primitive Christianity.’³¹² Others, like the Waldensians, sought to recreate the ‘primitive Christianity’ represented in Scripture by actively reforming the Church.

1.5.4.2. The Waldensians

The Waldensians are a particularly interesting group in relation to the QWH. As Lambert states, ‘The Waldensians, the last and the most tenacious of the twelfth-century wandering-preacher movements, are the classic example of the would-be reform movement drawn into heresy by the inadequacies of ecclesiastical authority.’³¹³ Valdes, the movement’s founder, was a wealthy businessman and layperson who lived in Lyons, France in the mid-12th century.³¹⁴ Around 1170, he rejected his wealth and family and set out to live a spiritual life.³¹⁵ But as shown by Lambert:

His aim was the apostolic life of poverty and preaching on the lines of the gospel texts. What distinguishes him from earlier wandering preachers, however, is his concern as a layman for self-instruction through vernacular translations of Scripture and the Fathers. Etienne de Bourbon...tells us that he ‘was not well-educated, but on hearing the gospels was anxious to learn more precisely what was in them...not only for many Books of the Bible but also for many passages from the Fathers,’ set about commissioning translations, then drew followers. He desired to preach, and he and his followers set about doing so.³¹⁶

This ultimately led Valdes and his followers into conflict with the Church, where canon law forbade anybody but the clergy from preaching.³¹⁷ By 1180, the Waldensians had been excommunicated for their beliefs.

The Waldensians also espoused Biblical study in the vernacular to allow individuals to pursue their own salvation. In the early years of the movement, women preached as well

³¹² Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, (3rd edition), 19-20.

³¹³ Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, (3rd edition), 70.

³¹⁴ Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, (3rd edition), 70.

³¹⁵ Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, 448.

³¹⁶ Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 70–71.

³¹⁷ Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, 448.

as men, however this characteristic was not maintained throughout their history.³¹⁸ One significant point of departure from the QWH is that the Waldensians were not attempting widespread reform of the Church; they did not view the papacy as the Antichrist or subscribe to the idea of a 'visible and invisible' community.³¹⁹ Instead, their focus was on their ability to read the Bible in the vernacular and preach as they saw fit, but they were never as radical as the Lollards, Hussites, or Early Quakers.

1.5.4.3. The Free Spirits

Another heresy of interest was the Free Spirits. These heretics were mystical and had many beliefs similar to the Early Quakers, including emphasis on private prayer, the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the importance of reading the Bible in the vernacular, a belief in the visible and invisible Church, opposition to the Established Churches, itinerant preaching, and giving women a leading role within the movement.³²⁰

However, the Free Spirits were never a distinct group, instead often being an offshoot of the larger, ill-defined group known as the Beguines (female) and Beghards (male),³²¹ as well as unrelated individuals who identified, or were identified, as Free Spirits.³²² As Russell states, 'these heretics never existed as a group except in the fantasy of the agents of order...Once categorized, they could be assigned an amalgam of beliefs and practices (such as sexual license) that corresponded little with reality.'³²³ The term 'Free Spirit' was

³¹⁸ Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, 576–577. It is worth noting that some 16th-century anti-Catholic writers regarded the Waldensians as forerunners of the Protestant Reformation. See, for example, S. J. Barnett, 'Where was your Church before Luther? Claims for the Antiquity of Protestantism Examined', *Church History*, 68 (1999): 14–41, 20–21.

³¹⁹ Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, 319

³²⁰ For more specific work on the Free Spirits, see: Russell, *Dissent and Order in the Middle Ages*, 76–78; Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, 259–281 and Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 163–181.

³²¹ Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, 319 and Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 381.

³²² Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 174–176.

³²³ Russell, *Dissent and Order in the Middle Ages*, 66–77.

associated with the set of beliefs and was more of a radical theological stream found within a larger movement. In many ways, it is more accurate to consider the Free Spirits as representing a collection of ideas rather than a distinct movement.³²⁴ Indeed, the Catholic authorities accused individuals of being a 'Free Spirit,' not assigning their heretical beliefs to one specific group.³²⁵ The fact that the term 'Free Spirit' was used to define a set of ideas as opposed to a group of individuals means that, although some who were called Free Spirits espoused ideas similar to those of the QWH, there is no evidence of a direct connection between Free Spirit theology or practice and Wycliffe, Hus or the Early Quakers.

In fact, the expression of Free Spirit theology was more radical than the QWH, although closer to the Early Quakers than to Wycliffe or Hus. The Beguines and Beghards lived communal lives of extreme apostolic poverty, shut off from the world.³²⁶ Confusing matters even further is that the label 'Free Spirits' was used by some as a license to commit violence, rape, idolatry, promiscuous sex, and many other acts that were obvious violations of societal norms.³²⁷

For these reasons the Free Spirits are not within the scope of this dissertation. Moreover, as stated above, the correspondence among the QWH occurs within geographic and temporal proximity. The evidence shows that the Early Quakers exhibited an understanding of Wycliffe's and Hus' teachings and of their legacy in the context of the Protestant movement,³²⁸ further pointing to a stronger correspondence between the QWH than other groups, such as the Waldensians or Free Spirits.

³²⁴ Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 180.

³²⁵ For a more detailed discussion, see: Marguerite Porete, *The Mirror of Simple Souls*, trans. Ellen L. Babinsky (New York, NY: Paulist Press, 1993).

³²⁶ Robert Lerner, *The Heresy of the Free Spirit in the Later Middle Ages* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1972).

³²⁷ Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, 325-327.

³²⁸ See: Sections 3.6 and 3.7.

1.5.4.4. Why Not the Lollards and Hussites?

The focus of this dissertation is on the relationship amongst the Early Quakers and Wycliffe and Hus, and not the Lollards and Hussites. This is because the Early Quaker writers did not mention the Lollards or Hussites but instead specifically mentioned Wycliffe and Hus,³²⁹ indicating the Early Quakers' affinity for the individuals but not necessarily for their movements. Moreover, of the *Book of Martyrs* focused on Wycliffe and Hus, not their respective movements.³³⁰

Recent scholarship has shown that the beliefs of the Lollards and Hussites eventually differed, sometimes significantly, from those of their founders. The Lollards promoted a more radical reforming of the Church than Wycliffe posited; for example, more forcefully attacking saints' days³³¹ or the entire church hierarchy.³³² Ultimately, in many ways, the Lollards 'expressed an essentially moral rather than theological standpoint. There is no trace of Wyclif's theoretical premises: merely his conclusions as they affected spiritual life and the practices of the church.'³³³ Although they held to many of Wycliffe's beliefs, Lollard theology and practice ultimately differed from what Wycliffe had espoused.³³⁴

The Hussites, even more than the Lollards, differed significantly from their founder's beliefs. By 1419, Hussites had fractured into many different factions, which varied from the moderate Utraquists to the extreme Taborites and Orebiters.³³⁵ Taking violent action against

³²⁹ See: Section 3.7.

³³⁰ See: Section 3.6.

³³¹ Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, 576.

³³² Russell, *Dissent and Order in the Middle Ages*, 85–86.

³³³ Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, 576.

³³⁴ For a more detailed discussion, see: Aston, *Lollards and Reformers*, 83; Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 234-271; and Rex, *The Lollards*, 54–55.

³³⁵ Russell, *Dissent and Order in the Middle Ages*, 91-94.

the Catholic authorities during the Hussite Crusades, the Hussites sought to separate themselves completely from Papal authority, something Hus never advocated.³³⁶

The correspondence amongst the Early Quakers and Wycliffe and Hus was stronger than the correspondence between the Early Quakers and any of the other heresies of the Middle Ages. The evidence for this correspondence included a similarity both of belief and of practice, temporal proximity, the prominence of Wycliffe and Hus in Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*,³³⁷ and the direct mention of Wycliffe and Hus by various Early Quakers. For these reasons, this dissertation focuses on Wycliffe and Hus and not on the movements they founded.

1.6. Outline of Dissertation

Although this dissertation concurs with the traditional starting point of Quakerism, held to be Fox's preaching in 1646 to 1647, it departs from earlier research to show that the early period ended in 1678, when the London Yearly Meeting (LYM), working in conjunction with the SDMM,³³⁸ effectively exerted a centralized control on Quaker life and thinking,³³⁹ thus limiting the possibility for the spread of divergent ideas. This dissertation identifies and describes the specific characteristics of Early Quakers before 1678 in Chapter 2.

A steady stream of heretical theology and practice has always existed in the Christian world, a stream that reflects the specific time and place in which it arises as well as the elements derived from previous heretics. Chapter 3 sets out the background of Wycliffe and Hus, including their history, theology, practice, and politics. This is followed by a discussion

³³⁶ Russell, *Dissent and Order in the Middle Ages*, 90.

³³⁷ See: Sections 3.6 and 3.7.

³³⁸ See: Section 2.5.3.

³³⁹ See: Section 2.5.3.

of the relationship between Wycliffe and Hus and the influence Wycliffe had on Hus. This chapter concludes with an examination of the nature of the understanding of Wycliffe and Hus by the Early Quakers by focusing on how this understanding came into being and how it was put into practice.

This dissertation argues that the Early Quakers' theology and philosophy drew inspiration from an understanding of Wycliffe and Hus and of the legacy that they left. Chapter 4 explores the correspondence between the Early Quakers and the teachings of Wycliffe and Hus, examining the different characteristics that make up this correspondence.

Chapter 5 concludes the dissertation by: reviewing the conclusions drawn from the primary and secondary source material; outlining the process utilized in discovering these conclusions; and explaining the importance of these findings for future scholarship.

Chapter Two: Early Quakerism

2.1. Introduction

This chapter explores the Early Quaker movement, specifically the theological beliefs and the actions those beliefs were responsible for. This chapter first defines the time period of the Early Quakers (Section 2.2). Next, it discusses what is defined as ‘Normative Quakerism,’ meaning the specific characteristics of the Early Quaker movement (Section 2.3). This discussion will use the various definitions of Quakerism as laid out by George Fox in his work *Some Principles of the Elect People of God Who in Scorn Are Called Quakers*, James Nayler’s *Love to the Lost*, Edward Burrough’s *Declaration of Faith*, and Robert Barclay’s *An Apology for the True Christian Divinity*. These works, starting in 1656 with Nayler and ending in 1678 with the English version of Barclay’s *Apology*, help to set the parameters for a definition of Early Quakerism (2.3.1.1 to 2.3.1.4). This chapter then considers current scholarship on Early Quakers, focusing on the characteristics identified by two of today’s leading Early Quaker scholars, Carole Spencer and Rosemary Moore (Section 2.4). Finally, the chapter sets out this author’s conclusions as to the 11 characteristics that define early Quakerism, followed by a discussion of each characteristic (Section 2.5).

2.2. Definition of the ‘Early’ Period of Quakerism

Early Quakerism was characterized by significant diversity of belief and practice and by a lack of central authority.¹ Over time, however, a largely unified Quaker theology emerged and, with it, an effective authority structure that could enforce the new orthodoxy.² This section explores that development and concludes that the period of the Early Quakers

¹ See: Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 7; Richard G. Bailey, ‘Was Seventeenth Century Quaker Christology Homogeneous?’ in *The Creation of Quaker Theory*, 61–82; Hill, ‘Ranters and Quakers,’ in *The World Turned Upside Down*, 251–259; Mack, *Visionary Women*, 272–278.

² Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 227–228.

ended in 1678, with the society-wide implementation of various controls by the Early Quaker leadership, best exemplified by Fox's *Gospel Ordering*.³

This dissertation establishes the end of the Early Quaker period, 1678, by setting parameters to define characteristics of the Early Quakers and by identifying the point at which those characteristics changed. This dissertation argues that the form and characteristics of the Quaker movement before and after 1678 were significantly different so as to be considered distinct movements. Other scholars argue different dates for this point, using various criteria to establish when the Early Quaker movement transitioned to the more established second-generation Quaker movement.

Some, like Tarter,⁴ Mack,⁵ and Moore,⁶ argue for a date based on the increasing control exerted by the central meeting in London during Fox's 'Gospel Ordering.' As Mack states:

In the wake of the crises occasioned by Nayler, Perrot, and Pennyman, and amid the hardships caused by ongoing persecution, the Quakers perceived a need for increased structure and organization in order to ensure both their own spiritual well-being and the material survival of the movement. Thus, they adopted a formal peace testimony, pledging themselves to good behavior as loyal citizens... They toned down the style of preaching itself from confrontational prophecy to one that emphasized coherent sermons, delivered by mature, recognized leaders.⁷

For these scholars, the increased need for more unified voice from the Quaker community in the face of political and societal persecution is the cause of separation between the Early Quakers and subsequent generations.

³ See: Section 2.5.3.

⁴ Tarter, 'Go North!' 91.

⁵ Mack, *Visionary Women*, 273–274.

⁶ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 129.

⁷ Mack, *Visionary Women*, 273–274.

Others, like Gwyn⁸ and Spencer,⁹ look more at the codification of Quaker theology as the point of departure from the Early Quaker period to the second generation. For these scholars, the change from an ecstatic, charismatic theology to a more refined one, as presented by second-generation Quaker leaders, such as William Penn¹⁰ and Robert Barclay,¹¹ is the dividing line. These efforts by the Quaker leadership to create a more unified, overarching Quaker theology were viewed by Gwyn and others as attempts to bring some maturity to the Quaker movement and to present Quaker theology as more than a series of negative comparisons (i.e., ‘we are not this or that’).¹² This change to a more regimented ‘we believe in/practice/preach’ form of theological thought represents the Quaker’s threshing out the parameters of membership in the movement and thus informing the social changes on which Moore and Tarter focus.

Quakerism from its start was a fractured community, with individuals coming to the Society with vastly differing religious experiences. As Moore puts it, ‘many [people] had explored widely in current religious ideas and before finding a home, often after great trouble and distress, with the Quakers.’¹³ From its inception, the group consisted of various seekers—people who were searching for their own, personal answer to the religious questions that troubled them.¹⁴ In early Quakerism, many seekers found that their differing beliefs were considered for validity and were tolerated, if not totally accepted, by the rest of the

⁸ Gwyn, *Apocalypse of the Word*, 133 and Gwyn, *Seekers Found*, 367.

⁹ Spencer, ‘Holiness: the Quaker Way to Perfection,’ 91.

¹⁰ William Penn, ‘No Cross, No Crown,’ (first published 1688).

¹¹ Barclay, *An Apology for the True Christian Divinity* (first published 1678, reprinted 2002 by Quaker Heritage Press).

¹² Barbour and Roberts, Part C ‘The Truth Defended: Introduction,’ in *Early Quaker Writings*, 246.

¹³ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 115.

¹⁴ These seekers tended to have traveled several paths including Calvinism, Puritanism, ‘Shattered Baptists,’ Diggers, and even service in the Army. Gwyn, *Seekers Found*, 60.

Society.¹⁵ One principle on which the earliest Quakers could all agree was their belief in the need to keep searching for the answers to their questions, and to do it together, as one community, in the ‘Light’ of God.¹⁶

The difference in views among Early Quakers on the Peace Testimony presents an interesting example of beliefs on the ‘fringe’ of early Quaker thought. As Moore demonstrates, not all Quakers held to this tenet of pacifism in the early days of Quakerism.¹⁷ Indeed, the move toward the public profession of pacifism may have been triggered more by politics—the restoration of the monarchy and a need to prove that Quakers were not a *violent* threat—than theology.¹⁸ Although it seems that most Early Quakers were pacifists, following the example of Jesus and the Apostles or coming to pacifism through the teachings of Fox, others held a different view. Moore comments that Edward Burrough, a leading London Quaker in the 1650s, did not sign either of the earliest unified Quaker pacifist pamphlets, including the *Declaration from the Harmless and Innocent People of God called Quakers*, which formed the basis of the traditional Peace Testimony.¹⁹ And, as quoted above, Mack views the Early Quaker adoption of ‘a formal peace testimony, pledging themselves to good behavior as loyal citizens,’²⁰ as being primarily politically, not spiritually, motivated. Also, many Quakers had served in the Parliamentary (Roundhead) Army, thus viewing themselves as having done ‘God’s work’ in a just war.²¹ Some continued to serve in the military once they had ‘turned to the light,’²² and differing opinions over militia or army service appear in the Quaker pamphlet literature and in debates. What is clear is that there

¹⁵ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 115.

¹⁶ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 81.

¹⁷ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 122.

¹⁸ Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down*, 241.

¹⁹ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 181.

²⁰ Mack, *Visionary Women*, 273.

²¹ Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down*, 241.

²² Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down*, 246-247.

existed a difference of views amongst the Early Quakers until a society-wide decision was made and implemented, changing the nature of Quakerism itself.

Differing beliefs led to many disputes amongst the Early Quakers, causing cracks in the movement's unity. Although disparate ideas could be 'tolerated,' many Early Quakers believed that the 'leading of the Light,' would bring with it a certain unity by leading Quakers to believe and act in a similar fashion.²³ This belief led some Early Quakers to view those on the fringes of Quaker thought as not being in the light, and thus to be excluded from the corporate aspects of Quakerism. Being out of step meant not only being in disagreement with the corporate body, but also acting contrary to the communally perceived 'will of God.'²⁴

The need for unity was fostered by the external persecution suffered by Early Quakers, as evidenced by the primary source material dealing with the causes of and defense against the persecution being dealt upon the Early Quakers.²⁵ Prompted by anti-Quaker writings and rumors, Quakers responded to their attackers with renewed emphasis on unification in thought and practice, setting out to 'defend the Truth' of their message.²⁶ Attacks on Quaker beliefs by anti-Quaker writers, such as Richard Baxter, forced the early Quaker leaders to attempt some form of control on the Society as a whole to present a unified response.²⁷ Works such as the 'Epistle of the Elders of Balby', the first document prescribing right conduct, show the tightrope the Early Quaker leadership walked, stating:

²³ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 115-116.

²⁴ As can be seen in the Perrot incident, in which Perrot's concern had to do with the proper behavior during worship, specifically the wearing of hats and shoes. Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 194-196, 202-203. See: Section 2.5.3.

²⁵ Barbour and Roberts, *Early Quaker Writings*, 54, 116-140.

²⁶ Barbour and Roberts, Part C 'The Truth Defended: Introduction,' in *Early Quaker Writings*, 246.

²⁷ See: Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 111; Barbour and Roberts, *Early Quaker Writings*, 264-297.

Dearly beloved Friends, these things we do not lay upon you as a rule or form to walk by, but that all, with the measure of light which is pure and holy, may be guided: and so in the light walking and abiding, these may be fulfilled in the Spirit, not from the letter, for the letter killeth but the Spirit giveth life.²⁸

Until these controls were in firmly place, however, there was still the possibility for heterogeneous ideas and beliefs within the Society. This dissertation argues that these controls, although they were implemented earlier, did not have a pervasive effect on the entire Quaker community until 1678.

Quakers, from an early date, practiced self-censorship to achieve goals, such as protecting themselves from legal challenges²⁹ or from attacks by anti-Quaker writers and thinkers.³⁰ As Moore discusses, Early Quaker leaders, such as Fox, Nayler, and Burrough, varied their terminology between published material and personal letters with other Quakers, showing an awareness of the need for a form of public self-censorship.³¹ Nayler, 'like Fox...became more cautious in his use of explicit language,' for fear of offending or confusing either other Early Quakers or the larger general public.³² However, it became clear to many Early Quakers that individual self-control proved to be an ineffective safeguard against individual members of the community pursuing a course of action that would be perceived negatively by the general public.

Perhaps the greatest trial, in terms of public perception, faced by the Early Quakers was in 1656 with the Nayler incident in Bristol.³³ In October 1656, Nayler and his mainly

²⁸ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 138.

²⁹ Such as the Blasphemy Act of 1650. See: Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 78-79

³⁰ Such as Baxter and Bunyan. See: Barbour and Roberts, *Early Quaker Writings*, 262-314

³¹ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 78.

³² Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 79.

³³ See: Moore, 'The Consequences of James Nayler,' in *The Light in Their Consciences*, 35-51; David Neelon, Chapter 14 'The Ride into Bristol, Blasphemy and Imprisonment,' in Neelon, David, *James Nayler: Revolutionary to Prophet* (Becket, MA: Leadings Press, 2002), 145-159.

female followers, including Martha Simmonds, staged a public demonstration that proved disastrous. Nayler was convinced to reenact Christ's ride into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, attended by followers who sang 'Holy, holy, holy' and strewed the muddy path with garments.³⁴ On 16 December 1656, Nayler was convicted of blasphemy in a highly publicized trial before the Second Protectorate Parliament.³⁵ Although he escaped execution, he was pilloried and whipped through the streets of London, was branded with the letter B on his forehead, had his tongue pierced with a hot iron, and was then transported back to Bristol to be whipped through its streets, too, before enduring 2 years imprisonment and hard labor.³⁶

This incident was a bonanza for critics of the Early Quakers.³⁷ The Early Quaker leadership quickly distanced themselves from Nayler and his followers.³⁸ In fact, after his release, Nayler publicly stated his regret for the problems he caused for the Early Quaker movement.³⁹ This incident was one of the leading causes of the Early Quaker's movement toward a more unified and polished public face.

Some scholars, such as Damrosch⁴⁰ and Hill,⁴¹ view this incident as the turning point in Early Quaker history, when the momentum of the early years of the movement was slowed as the movement tested the boundaries of societal decencies. Prior to this, Nayler had been one the leaders of the Early Quaker movement, having converted numerous individuals with his skillful writing and personal charisma. He was as famous as Fox and Fell, known both inside the movement and outside it in the rest of English society, and his downfall was

³⁴ Neelon, *James Nayler*, 145.

³⁵ Neelon, *James Nayler*, 147–149.

³⁶ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 40; Neelon, *James Nayler*, 154–155.

³⁷ Moore, *The Light in Their Conscience* 41–48..

³⁸ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 40.

³⁹ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 41–42.

⁴⁰ Leo Damrosch, *The Sorrows of the Quaker Jesus: James Nayler and the Puritan Crackdown on the Free Spirit* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996).

⁴¹ Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down*, 250.

something the Early Quaker leadership had to quickly deal with. Other scholars argue that this incident was used by Fox as an excuse to begin the implementation of his Gospel Ordering.⁴² The Early Quakers had already begun to distance themselves from the more ecstatic elements of the movement, and when Nayler and his followers were arrested, ‘they received no support from local Friends and the whole party was promptly arrested.’⁴³ Yet, once Nayler’s punishment was handed down, ‘Friends were shocked by the severity of Nayler’s punishment, and there is a marked contrast in the attitude of Bristol Friends when Nayler was sent back for the second part of his punishment in January 1657.’⁴⁴ In this context, the Nayler incident was important but was not the only catalyst for change from the first to the second generation of Quakerism.

This dissertation contends that the Nayler incident, along with the Restoration, set in motion a process that culminated in 1678, when the various controls imposed by the central Quaker authorities were fully implemented. This control was exercised in various ways, including the censorship of bodies, such as the Second-Day Morning Meeting (SDMM); epistles on right conduct; and the printing, distribution to all Meetings, and promotion of works such as Barclay’s *Apology* in 1678.⁴⁵ While some of the reforming trends began prior to this date, ‘the many letters concerning doubts about the ordering of ministry, and how to handle difficulties, show that it took some years to work out the details.’⁴⁶

Through the 1650s and early 1660s, the pattern of self-censorship continued in reaction to the pressures from the outside world.⁴⁷ The Early Quakers perceived the need for

⁴² Tarter, ‘Go North!’ 89-90.

⁴³ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 40.

⁴⁴ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 42.

⁴⁵ Tarter, ‘Go North!’ 93.

⁴⁶ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 136.

⁴⁷ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 229–230.

a public face of unity, with the corollary need to suppress from the public view ideas that were too heretical.⁴⁸ As direct persecution of the Quakers increased, Quakers felt compelled to manage these ideas internally. Beyond Fox's and Fell's personal magnetism, there was no apparatus in place to deal with internal dissent or other difficulties among fellow Quakers, and that dissention could spill over into public controversy, such as happened with Rhys Jones.⁴⁹ During the Interregnum period,⁵⁰ persecution increased with the passage in 1662 of the Quaker Act, and again in 1664 with the Conventicle Act, which gave government sanction for anti-Quaker sentiments.⁵¹

In late 1666, Fox began a long path to addressing internal dissent through a reorganization of Quaker society, with the goal of realizing his view of the 'Gospel Order.'⁵² As Gwyn states, 'The consolidation of the movement into a coherent, single body...must be largely credited to Fox's initiative and relentless efforts,'⁵³ and without whom the reforms would not have been accepted by Quaker society at large.⁵⁴ A significant motivation for this effort was to ensure a process to deal with dissent or leadings not 'in the Light.'⁵⁵ A defining characteristic of this Gospel Order was an increase in centralized control from London.⁵⁶ Fox began to put in place corporate bodies, such as the Meeting for Suffering, the SDMM, and the

⁴⁸ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 79.

⁴⁹ Rhys Jones led a group called the 'Proud Quakers,' based in Nottingham Castle. They were separated from the main body of Early Quakers by Fox and the rest of the leadership. They continued to exist as an independent body, often causing great confusion and giving ammunition to the enemies of the Early Quakers. The Proud Quakers 'allegedly did not believe in the human Christ, and they permitted greater laxity of conduct than mainstream Quakers.' See: Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 7; Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down*, 250.

⁵⁰ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 182–183.

⁵¹ Tarter, 'Go North!' 94; See: Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 185 .

⁵² See: Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 129.

⁵³ Gwyn, *Apocalypse of the Word*, 52.

⁵⁴ However, this does not take into account the societal pressures faced by the Early Quakers, forcing them to adopt beliefs such as regarding the Peace Testimony.

⁵⁵ Tarter, 'Go North!' 90–91.

⁵⁶ Tarter, 'Go North!' 91.

Men's Yearly Meeting, that would define Quakers to themselves and to outsiders.⁵⁷

Although started in 1666, this process lasted into the late 1670s, and, once completed, marked the end of the early period of Quakerism.

As Tarter demonstrates, starting in the 1660s, Quakers were increasingly instructed by their leaders, such as Fox, Marshall, and Fell, to 'test' their 'leadings' before presenting them to the Meeting as a whole, thereby discouraging the more spontaneous aspects of worship that had previously characterized the Quaker movement.⁵⁸ Whereas in *Some Principles* Fox argues:

In the dayes of the Prophets, the Prophet *Trembled* and *reeled* like a Drunken Man, because of the Iniquity of the People; and because of the Holiness of the Word of the Lord he *Trembled* when he heard his Voyce; & when the Lord spoke to him he *feared exceedingly*.⁵⁹

Moore shows 'the damping-down of Quaker enthusiasm is noticeable from the middle 1650's, as quaking and other extravagant actions practically disappeared.'⁶⁰ And Mack highlights the effect this damping-down had on women and their role in early Quakerism, forcing a redefinition of this role.⁶¹ The Quaker leadership wanted to stop members from getting caught up in personal leadings, such as those of Nayler in 1656, which threatened to fracture the society.⁶² To do this, they needed to change the nature of Quakerism from its uncontrolled, ecstatic nature as a sect to one of increased discipline and unity in the form of a defined church.⁶³

The Quaker leadership also began to control the itinerant preachers who had helped spread the Truth from the earliest days of the Lamb's War. This group had been the most

⁵⁷ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 226–227.

⁵⁸ Tarter, 'Go North!' 90.

⁵⁹ Fox, 'XIX Concerning Trembling and Quaking,' in *Some Principles of the Elect People*, 25–26.

⁶⁰ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 215.

⁶¹ Mack, *Visionary Women*, 283–285.

⁶² Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 223–224.

⁶³ Mack, *Visionary Women*, 274.

active segment of Quaker society in outreach to the larger world. From its founding, the call to ministry was one of the hallmarks of Quaker life, and, as Moore states ‘this concentration on mission is one of the most distinctive features of early Quakerism. Other sects...had itinerant preachers, but in this, as in other matters, the Quakers were more thoroughgoing.’⁶⁴ This call arose from a profound movement of the spirit by God to go forth and proclaim the ‘Truth’ to those who had not listened to their own inward Light.⁶⁵ Many who became wandering preachers of ‘Truth’ were called spontaneously, and those who were called often preached their personal beliefs, sometimes putting them at odds with other leading Quakers.⁶⁶ As Moore outlines ‘The ministers were advised by Fox and financed as necessary by Margret Fell, and kept under some sort of control if their message was not acceptable.’⁶⁷

Starting in the 1670s, however, traveling ministers had to obtain certificates to preach to ensure that they preached a sound form of doctrine, limiting the various theological ideas that individual Quakers could espouse.⁶⁸ More formal than the permission obtained from local meetings, these certificates served as a check on the message the ministers were preaching. This resulted in a more homogenous form of Quakerism than during the period when the itinerant ministry was spontaneous.⁶⁹

In the 1670s, the move to more centralized authority in Quaker society was completed. As Punshon states, ‘It took a decade, from 1668 to 1678, for Friends to round off their existing structure with a permanent, centrally organized representative body.’⁷⁰ This was a time of coalescence. In 1668, a group of ministers met to discuss the settling of local

⁶⁴ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 124.

⁶⁵ Spencer, ‘Holiness: the Quaker Way to Perfection,’ 156–157.

⁶⁶ Mack, *Visionary Women*, 184.

⁶⁷ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 124.

⁶⁸ Tarter, ‘Go North!’ 91; Mack, *Visionary Women*, 274.

⁶⁹ Tarter ‘Go North!’ 91.

⁷⁰ Punshon, *Portrait in Grey*, 90.

structures. This group eventually led in 1671 to the creation of a Yearly Meeting in London (LYM), whose goal it was to be ‘a central body to advise on the management of Friends’ “public affairs.”⁷¹ However, it was not until 1678 that this group met on a regular basis. During the intervening years, the SDMM (1673) and the Meeting for Sufferings (1676) were created to help centralize Quaker action and thought.⁷² The SDMM is perhaps most important in the context of this thesis, in that ‘the printing function later delegated to it enabled it, in effect, to operate as a censorship committee,’⁷³ or as Tarter notes, in regards to the postmortem publication of Fox’s *Journal and Epistles*, ‘this wave of censorship and controlled historiography primarily directed by the SDMM eradicated all traces of enthusiasm, or Fox’s message of divine indwelling, and concomitantly silenced women in the Society of Friends.’⁷⁴ In this way, the SDMM became responsible for ensuring that the ‘weakness and nakedness [of the Society of Friends] may not be expressed in print to the whole world.’⁷⁵

During this time, there were several contests of will between the Quaker leadership and the fringe elements of Quakerism. As Moore describes, internal disputes between Quakers were present in the 1660s (Perrot)⁷⁶ and 1670s (Wilkinson-Story).⁷⁷ Moore⁷⁸ and Hill⁷⁹ show that one well-respected early Quaker, Burrough, along with other Friends, may not have agreed with what became the Peace Testimony. After 1678, the forces of censorship

⁷¹ Tarter, ‘Go North!’ 91.

⁷² Tarter, ‘Go North!’ 91; See: Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 227.

⁷³ Punshon, *Portrait in Grey*, 91.

⁷⁴ Tarter, ‘Go North!’ 93.

⁷⁵ Friends House Library, London, mss. Morning Meeting Minutes 27: 3rd Month, 5th 1978. Quoted by Michele Lise Tarter, ‘Go North!’, 91.

⁷⁶ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 194–196, 202.

⁷⁷ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 31.

⁷⁸ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 178, 181, 184.

⁷⁹ Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down*, 254.

were strong enough to clamp down on fringe ideas, thereby limiting the chances for transmission of these ideas to those outside of the Early Quaker movement.⁸⁰

Fox's reordering also sought to control the internal life of the meeting and private lives of Friends, thereby creating a mold into which Quakers should fit.⁸¹ Increases in controls of conduct limited Quaker thought and discussion, thus stifling any heretical ideas. As Gwyn states, 'to some, Fox's organizing plan may have seemed different in tone from the expansive days of the Commonwealth.'⁸² Although ideas outside of the established norms continued to exist after 1678 within the Quaker movement, the implementation of Fox's Gospel Order put a practical limit on the appearance of such ideas in either public literature or personal correspondence.

As Quakerism grew from a small group of like-minded individuals to a national organization, a need was felt by the Early Quaker leadership to exercise some controls on the movement. Tarter, Mack, and Moore agree that the SDMM was able to operate as a censorship committee in charge of keeping works deemed unacceptable or embarrassing to Quakers from being printed.⁸³ This group's chief function was to keep the most heretical of ideas out of the public sphere, and after its founding in 1673, all Quaker literature had to conform to the more mainstream views held by this body.⁸⁴ With the formal creation of LYM in 1678, the last control was in place to rein in anyone believed to have turned from the light. Although the Early Quakers were forced at various times to suppress ideas in the

⁸⁰ Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down*, 241–243.

⁸¹ See: Vann, *Social Development*, 128; Tarter, 'Go North!' 91.

⁸² Gwyn, *Apocalypse of the Word*, 50.

⁸³ Tarter, 'Go North!' 91–92; Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 227; Mack, *Visionary Women*, 283–284.

⁸⁴ Tarter, 'Go North!' 91; Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 227.

movement,⁸⁵ it was not until the more rigid, centralized control from LYM and the SDMM, fully in place by 1678, that a body existed to enforce mainstream ideas.⁸⁶

The attempt by Early Quakers to establish society-wide norms can be seen in many sources. Epistles sent to local meetings dictating sound principles of practice, more than belief, exemplify the central authority developed by Fox and others who attempted to bring about the proper order of the society, based on their own leadings in the Light. For Moore:

[T]he best evidence for the increasing institutionalizing of Quakerism in the second half of the 1650's come from several highly prescriptive documents covering all aspects of church order and discipline, including people's private lives.⁸⁷

These epistles outlined right conduct in the meeting, in private life, in belief, and in philosophy. As such, they are a record of the effort to establish boundaries and norms for Early Quakers.⁸⁸

This formalization of practice was further advanced by the printing of tracts, such as Barclay's *Apology* (1676), discussed in detail in the next section, and Penn's *No Cross, No Crown* (1682), which outlined the fundamental theology that Quakers were expected to adopt in the second generation of Quakers. As Reay relates, 'The Quakers of the Interregnum were not preoccupied with theology; it was only later, in the 1670's, that they set out their religious doctrine in any systematic form.'⁸⁹ Before that, in the words of Hill, Quakers usually defined their beliefs defensively, 'by negatives.'⁹⁰ These tracts were attempts both to explain Quaker belief and practice to outsiders and to inform those in the Society what they should believe and how they should act. If one did not agree with the beliefs espoused by Barclay and the

⁸⁵ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 78.

⁸⁶ Tarter, 'Go North!' 91.

⁸⁷ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 137.

⁸⁸ Vann, *Social Development*, VIII.

⁸⁹ Reay, *The Quakers and the English Revolution*, 33.

⁹⁰ Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down*, 192.

second generation of weighty Friends, then logically one was not Quaker.⁹¹ The move to a more systematic theology by these writers facilitated an understanding among Quakers and non-Quakers alike of what was ‘normal’ in Quaker belief.⁹² The result was the establishment of a Quaker archetype while simultaneously marginalizing forms of practice and belief that had been a part of early Quakerism.

After 1678, there were centralized controls on both the public face of Quakerism and the private lives of Quakers. In addition, a normative Quaker theology had emerged, which the centralized system of controls could enforce. Thus, for the purposes of this dissertation, 1678 is the year in which Quakerism completed the abandonment of free expression that characterized Early Quakers and became a body that vigorously sought to exclude those ideas not in the mainstream of Quaker belief and practice.

2.3. Normative Quakerism

To explore the fringes of Quaker and Christian thought, it is instructive to consider the characteristics of mainstream or ‘normative’ Quakerism. The preceding section demonstrates that, by 1678, the Quaker elders, through Fox’s ‘Gospel Ordering,’⁹³ had created a largely uniform system of practice and belief. This resulted in an archetype to which Quakers were expected to conform to continue participating in the corporate aspects of worship central to the Early Quaker beliefs on salvation.⁹⁴ Some of the proscriptions are seemingly trivial, such as those against sports or dress,⁹⁵ whereas others were central to developing the structure that would allow Quakerism to endure, such as the ordering of

⁹¹ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 225.

⁹² Tarter, ‘Go North!’ 93.

⁹³ This ‘Gospel Ordering’ was outlined by Fox in 1666 after his imprisonment in Scarborough Castle and was an attempt to reorganize the Quaker movement after his imprisonment. See: Gwyn, *Apocalypse of the Word*, 49; Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 227.

⁹⁴ See: Tarter, ‘Go North!’ 90–93; Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 214–228.

⁹⁵ Moore, Chapter 10 ‘Foundations of the Gospel Order,’ in *The Light in Their Consciences*, 129–141.

meetings into Monthly, Quarterly, and Yearly Meetings.⁹⁶ This dissertation examines the shared beliefs and experiences that united the Early Quakers and, in this unification, defined the movement as distinct from the rest of 17th-century English society.⁹⁷ The norms of the second period of Quakerism are rooted in, yet distinct from, the norms of the earliest period. As Mack states:

In short, the history of late seventeenth-century Quakerism presents the observer with a virtual ideal type of radical religious movement: a loose, egalitarian group under charismatic leadership evolving into a tightly knit, bureaucratized, hierarchical church.⁹⁸

This created a situation where two distinct types of Quakerism existed. These distinctions are discussed in the next two sections.

2.3.1. Early Quaker Texts That Contribute to Defining Normative Quakerism

From their inception, the Early Quakers produced many works that detailed their beliefs. Tracts such as James Nayler's *Love to the Lost* and Fox's *Some Principles* were systematic outlines of Quaker belief, as understood by their authors, at the time of their printing. The fact that these tracts were written by Early Quaker leaders, those with the authority to speak for the movement, indicates that at least some other Early Quakers held similar ideas. These tracts were addressed not to fellow Quakers, but as 'a Hand Held forth to the Helpless,'⁹⁹ in the case of Nayler, and 'For all *People* throughout all *Christendom* to Read over, and thereby their own States to Consider,'¹⁰⁰ in the case of Fox. Barclay's work was intended to clarify what Quakers believed to an audience outside of Quakerism.

⁹⁶ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 137.

⁹⁷ See: Gay Pilgrim's discussion of Early Quaker 'Otherness' in his discussion of 'Heterotopia' in his essay 'Taming Anarchy' in *The Creation of Quaker Theory*, 208–211.

⁹⁸ Mack, *Visionary Women*, 274.

⁹⁹ James Nayler, *Love to the Lost*, Originally printed 1665, Reprinted: (London, UK: Bell and Duldry, 1858).

¹⁰⁰ Fox, *Some Principles of the Elect People*, 1.

These works were not intended to be directly instructional to Quakers themselves, but more as a defense and recruitment tool. Burrough's *Declaration of Faith* is also addressed to a larger, public audience.¹⁰¹ It is not as systematic as the works of Nayler or Fox, but its style makes it easier to read. It was meant to be used as a tool for helping spread Early Quaker beliefs to the outside world, not as a proscriptive document sent by a central authority. Barclay's work, first written in Latin in 1676, was intended for an audience outside of Quakerism to clarify and defend what Quakers believed. With its publication in English in 1678 and distribution by the authorities in London to local Meetings, it came to represent an internal prescription on the proper form of Quakerism.¹⁰² The following section outlines the individual works, followed by a comparison of how these works influence a more detailed understanding of the characteristics of the Early Quakers.

2.3.1.1. Nayler's *Love to the Lost*

In early 1656, Nayler printed a tract titled *Love to the Lost: And a Hand Held Forth to the Helpless to Lead Out of the Dark*. Because it was before the Bristol incident, it was written at a time when Nayler was at his highest regard within the Quaker movement, when he was viewed as one of the most publically visible defenders of Quakerism and was called by his opponent their 'chief.'¹⁰³ It is clear that, at this point in time, Nayler was considered one of the leaders of the Early Quakers, and as such, 'Nayler's tone in these controversies is as fierce and confident as in earlier ministry—if not more so—and there seems to have been

¹⁰¹ Burrough, *Declaration of Faith*.

¹⁰² Tarter, 'Go North!' 93 and Mack, *Visionary Women*, 282-283

¹⁰³ Higgensen, T., 'A Testimony to the True Jesus,' in *The Works of James Nayler, Volume III*. ed. Licia Kuenning, (Quaker Heritage Press, 2007) xx. Again, this work is a response to Nayler, but included in his collected works for context.

no rift between him and the other leading Quakers before the summer of 1656.’¹⁰⁴ This fact gave Nayler’s voice in *Love to the Lost* legitimacy in the context of outlining the nature of and beliefs of the Early Quaker movement.

Printed in London,¹⁰⁵ this tract was aimed at those outside of the Quaker movement as a defense and justification of Quaker beliefs.¹⁰⁶ As such, it focuses on the various beliefs the Early Quakers held and finds the spiritual and biblical justification for each belief. It was intended to bring the Quaker belief system to the general public, as well as to be used as a recruitment tool. Ultimately, *Love to the Lost* initiated a public debate or ‘pamphlet war’ with a T. Higgensen, who responded with his own work, *A Testimony to the True Jesus*,¹⁰⁷ in which he attacks Nayler and his fellow Quakers. This ‘pamphlet war’ was one of several that Nayler had with critics of Quakerism and helps to illustrate his role in the Early Quaker movement prior to his incident in Bristol.

It is an extensive work, broken up into 25 different subject headings dealing with topics such as ‘Concerning Light and Life,’¹⁰⁸ to ‘Concerning the Word.’¹⁰⁹ Starting with ‘Concerning the Fall of Man,’¹¹⁰ Nayler attempted to outline, in great detail, the different theological and social beliefs represented in the Early Quaker movement.

¹⁰⁴ Licia Kuenning, ‘Editors Introduction,’ in *The Works of James Nayler, Volume III*. Ed. Licia Kuenning, (Quaker Heritage Press, 2007) iii,

¹⁰⁵ Nayler, *Love to the Lost*. As noted by the editor, ‘*Love to the Lost* appeared in several editions, the first two published in 1656. The first edition (which I do not have), dated Feb. 9, 1655/56 by Thomason, did not contain the final section on the Resurrection. I have worked from the second 1656 edition, with notes as to changes in the 1665 and one dated "London, 1671?" where the tentative date is apparently supplied by the Wing Catalog which numbers it 297A. These later editions omit Nayler's name from the title page, identifying him only by the initials J.N. at the end.’ Fn:1 of the edition used here.

¹⁰⁶ Kuenning, ‘Editor’s Introduction,’ in *The Works of James Nayler, Volume III*, iii, <http://www.qhpress.org/texts/nayler/vol3.html> [accessed Jan. 23, 2012]

¹⁰⁷ Higgensen, ‘A Testimony to the True Jesus,’ 1.

¹⁰⁸ Nayler, *Love to the Lost*, 4-7.

¹⁰⁹ Nayler, *Love to the Lost*, 10-12.

¹¹⁰ Nayler, *Love to the Lost*, 1-4.

This work, like Burrough's, details the beliefs and justifications of Quakers while avoiding the societal proscriptions found in Fox's and Barclay's work. As a prominent member of the Lamb's War, Nayler was part of one of the first groups of Quakers tasked with spreading the message of Quakerism to a larger audience.¹¹¹ The Valiant Sixty had helped to spread the Early Quakers message, and tracts such as this and Burrough's *Declaration of Faith* were the works that helped them spread this message.¹¹²

This work helps to create an understanding of Early Quakers by showing those theological and philosophical points used by a charismatic leader such as Nayler to convince those on the outside to join the movement. It helps to illustrate those characteristics that were appealing to the populace; the characteristics that helped unify the Early Quakers into a group.

2.3.1.2. Burrough's *Declaration of Faith*

Like *Love to the Lost*, Burrough's *Declaration of Faith* was addressed not to his fellow Quakers, but was 'written [so] that all people upon earth may know by whom [*i.e.*, Christ], and how we [Early Quakers] are saved.'¹¹³ He sought to explain 'what we believe concerning God, Christ, and the spirit, and of the things that are eternal, appertaining to all mankind to know and believe.'¹¹⁴ Burrough's use of the term 'we' instead of 'I' throughout the tract illustrates his belief that he was speaking on behalf of the entire Quaker movement, with each section beginning 'we believe...'¹¹⁵

Unlike Nayler's work, this tract was shorter and dealt more directly with Quaker beliefs and less with issues relating to the larger social picture. This may have to do with the

¹¹¹ Neelon, *James Nayler*, 99-112

¹¹² Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 47, 120.

¹¹³ Burrough, *Declaration of Faith*, Title Page.

¹¹⁴ Burrough, *Declaration of Faith*, 1.

¹¹⁵ Burrough, *Declaration of Faith*, 1.

movement of Quaker writings away from a didactic ‘we are this, not that’ to a more exclamatory ‘we are this,’ as outlined by Hill.¹¹⁶

This work helps illuminate what, after some time gathered together, the Early Quakers understood their movement to believe. Instead of including those points that were used to help bring outsiders into the fold, this work was used to help defend the faith by succinctly outlining what the Early Quakers believed.

2.3.1.3. Fox’s *Some Principles of the Elect People of God Who in Scorn Are Called Quakers*

In 1661, Fox published a tract entitled *Some Principles of the Elect People of God Who in Scorn Are Called Quakers*. As described in Chapter 1, this work dealt with 38 different points that outlined Fox’s vision and understanding of the main ‘principles’ of the Quaker movement.¹¹⁷

In the introduction, Fox provides the foundation of his belief, that ‘*Christ the Light, by which everyone is Enlightened that comes into the World, by Christ the Light which is the Way to God, and the Door out of the World through which they must enter in unto the Father from the World.*’¹¹⁸ Fox makes explicit in this statement that only through Christ, not the Established Church, could one find salvation. He continues:

I say the same *Light* makes manifest to you (if you love it) that Christ is the *Mediator betwixt you and God*; the same *Light* makes manifest *Christ the offering for your Sins*, and the *Sins of the whole World*; The same *Light* makes manifest that Christ is the *Way, the Truth, the Life*, and the *Word of God*, by *whom all things were made and Created.*¹¹⁹

This was the foundation upon which the rest of the Early Quaker movement was based.

¹¹⁶ Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down*, 236.

¹¹⁷ See:: Section 1.4.3.

¹¹⁸ Fox, ‘Introduction,’ in *Some Principles of the Elect People*, 5.

¹¹⁹ Fox, ‘Introduction,’ in *Some Principles of the Elect People*, 5.

Some Principles dealt with matters both theological and social, outlining the proper form of belief, worship, and social practice as witnessed by the diversity of topics covered, from *The Gospels and Worship* to *Good Manners* and *Hats, Scraping, Curtsies and Compliments*.¹²⁰ Fox and the Early Quakers viewed their theology as all-encompassing, affecting all spheres of their lives. The Early Quakers' conviction experience led them to believe that events of everyday life were as holy as those occurring in the church and that their actions reflected the Holy Spirit's dwelling within in the presence of the Light.¹²¹ As discussed in Chapter 1, this work provides a snapshot of Early Quakerism in 1661 and provides a useful benchmark in helping to define Early Quakerism.¹²²

Being printed after the Nayler incident and the Restoration, this work not only deals with the theological beliefs of the Early Quakers, but also provides clear examples of correct social conduct amongst the Early Quakers. Reacting defensively, Fox was attempting to show the wider world that the Early Quakers were not a free-wheeling, anarchist movement bent on disrupting the social order. By his language, it is clear that he hoped to show that there were controls built into the movement that would allow them to avoid persecution.

This work illustrates where the Early Quakers leadership wanted the movement to go. Its prescriptions on conduct and behavior show that Fox wished to move the Quakers toward being a more respected and accepted movement within the larger framework of English society. This work, being in response to outside pressure, allows an understanding of what the Early Quakers were trying to be, as opposed to Burrough and Nayler's works, which were stating what the Quakers were.

¹²⁰ Fox, 'Introduction,' in *Some Principles of the Elect People* 5-6.

¹²¹ Fox, 'Introduction,' in *Some Principles of the Elect People* 6.

¹²² See: Section 1.4.3.

2.3.1.4. Barclay's *Apology*

Often looked at as the primary source for understanding the principles that defined normative Quakerism as it emerged from its early period,¹²³ Barclay's *An Apology for the True Christian Divinity* was printed in 1676 in Latin and in English in 1678. Indeed, Barclay's work was so influential that, as Punshon states, 'throughout the subsequent century and a half, Barclay's *Apology* became the standard exposition of Quaker faith,'¹²⁴ becoming 'the most widely read defense of Quakerism.'¹²⁵ Barclay lists 15 points of contention between the Quakers and the Anglican Church. These 15 propositions describe, not only for other Quakers, but also for the King, the clergy, and the rest of English society, those beliefs that came to be commonly held by the Quakers.¹²⁶ As Tarter states, 'In this book, which was first published in Latin by the Friends in 1676 and later distributed to all Meetings, Robert Barclay rewrote Quaker theology by setting up a tradition of binarism of the body and spirit.'¹²⁷ This work was recognized by the Early Quakers as informative because it was distributed to all Meetings as an important piece in understanding the Quaker movement in 1676.¹²⁸

Barclay outlines in detail the spiritual and scriptural basis for the different propositions that he held to define the Quaker movement. Barclay first states the Quaker belief that the 'height of all happiness is placed in the true knowledge of God,'¹²⁹ without which, there can be no 'true and right understanding,'¹³⁰ of the faith. He argues that the only way to live a life worthy of God is to know God, not through education or the rote repetition

¹²³ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 110.

¹²⁴ Punshon, *Portrait in Grey*, 122.

¹²⁵ Mack, *Visionary Women*, 282.

¹²⁶ Barclay, *An Apology for the True Christian Divinity*, 7.

¹²⁷ Tarter, 'Go North!' 93.

¹²⁸ Mack, *Visionary Women*, 282–283.

¹²⁹ Barclay, *An Apology for the True Christian Divinity*, 19.

¹³⁰ Barclay, *An Apology for the True Christian Divinity*, 19.

of liturgies. He concludes by stating ‘this foundation and ground of knowledge is that which is most necessary to be known and believed in the first place.’¹³¹

Barclay argues ‘true’ knowledge of God ‘is in and by the Spirit... [and] that alone by which the true knowledge of God hath been, is, and can be only revealed.’¹³² For Barclay, the Quakers felt the need for this revelation to convert ‘the chaos of this world into that wonderful order wherein it was in the beginning and created man a living soul to rule and govern it.’¹³³ Barclay states that this Spirit ‘hath manifested himself all along unto the sons of men, patriarchs, prophets, and apostles,’¹³⁴ and that these ‘divine inward revelations... [were] absolutely necessary for the building up of true faith.’¹³⁵ This Spirit is beyond ‘examination, either of the outward testimony of the Scriptures, or of the natural reason of man,’¹³⁶ and must be allowed to flourish for the ‘true faith’ to flourish. He uses the terms ‘divine revelation,’¹³⁷ ‘inward revelation,’¹³⁸ and ‘inward illumination’¹³⁹ to describe the voice of the Spirit within, which became important imagery to his contemporaries and to future Quakers.

In terms of Scripture, Barclay outlines the Quaker belief in the following three points:

1. A faithful historical account of the actings of God’s people in divers ages, with much singular and remarkable providence attending them.
2. A prophetic account of several things, whereof some are already past, and some yet to come.
3. A full and ample account of all the chief principles of the doctrine of Christ, held forth in divers precious declarations, exhortations, and

¹³¹ Barclay, *An Apology for the True Christian Divinity*, 19.

¹³² Barclay, *An Apology for the True Christian Divinity*, 21.

¹³³ Barclay, *An Apology for the True Christian Divinity*, 21.

¹³⁴ Barclay, *An Apology for the True Christian Divinity*, 21.

¹³⁵ Barclay, *An Apology for the True Christian Divinity*, 21.

¹³⁶ Barclay, *An Apology for the True Christian Divinity*, 21.

¹³⁷ Barclay, *An Apology for the True Christian Divinity*, 21.

¹³⁸ Barclay, *An Apology for the True Christian Divinity*, 21.

¹³⁹ Barclay, *An Apology for the True Christian Divinity*, 21.

sentences, which, by the moving of God's spirit, were at several times, and upon sundry occasions, spoken and written unto some churches and their pastors¹⁴⁰

These were points of general agreement amongst Quakers at this time, who viewed the Bible as being literally divinely inspired, yet having to be read under the guidance of the 'Inward Light.'¹⁴¹ At the end of the third point, however, the concept that the Bible is not the literal word of God comes into play with Barclay's use of the phrase, 'were at several times ... pastors,'¹⁴² showing that God's time on Earth did not end with the apostolic era. Barclay then argues against final biblical authority, stating that 'because they are only a declaration of the fountain, and not the fountain itself, therefore they are not to be esteemed the principal ground of all Truth and knowledge, nor yet the "adequate primary rule of faith and manners,"'¹⁴³ and instead must be tested against the 'Inward Light' of the individual. He concludes by stating:

seeing we do therefore receive and believe the Scriptures, because they proceeded from the Spirit; therefore also the Spirit is more originally and principally the rule, according to that received maxim in the schools, *Propter quod unumquodque est tale, illud ipsum est magis tale*. Englished thus: 'That for which a thing is such, that thing itself is more such.'¹⁴⁴

Barclay firmly places salvation with Christ and the 'Word,' examining the concept that Christ's was 'a Light, that "whosoever believeth in him" should be saved; who "enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world,"'¹⁴⁵ allowing for personal salvation in the conviction process.¹⁴⁶ Barclay considers the issue of the availability of salvation to those 'who by providence are cast into those remote parts of the world, where the knowledge of the

¹⁴⁰ Barclay, *An Apology for the True Christian Divinity*, 62.

¹⁴¹ Mack, *Visionary Women*, 282-283.

¹⁴² Barclay, *An Apology for the True Christian Divinity*, 62.

¹⁴³ Barclay, *An Apology for the True Christian Divinity*, 62.

¹⁴⁴ Barclay, *An Apology for the True Christian Divinity*, 62.

¹⁴⁵ Barclay, *An Apology for the True Christian Divinity*, 96.

¹⁴⁶ See: Section 2.5.1

history is wanting, is made partakers of the divine mystery, if they receive and resist not that grace.¹⁴⁷ Barclay argues that Christ's salvation is not restricted to those who were born into the society controlled by the Christian church, but also to those groups who were open to the 'inward light' when it called them. Barclay rooted 'this salvation in that divine and evangelical principle of Light and Life, wherewith Christ hath enlightened every man that comes into the world,'¹⁴⁸ and will continue to do so in the future.

2.3.1.5. Comparison of the Early Quaker Works

These works share many characteristics that provide a picture of the beliefs of the Early Quakers. Central to all four works is their use of the term 'Light' to represent Christ's real presence within each individual. Without this Light, salvation is impossible. Nayler shows that, for the Early Quakers, this Light was, 'in the beginning with God, the Word, by which all things are made' and that 'the light, which from the Word came, who is the life, which life is the light of men.'¹⁴⁹ For the Early Quakers, the Light was their direct connection to God, the foundation for their faith.

These works also discuss the Early Quaker belief in the availability to all of Christ's salvation. Burroughs states that 'we believe that unto all people upon the face of the whole earth...may return and be saved by Christ Jesus,'¹⁵⁰ showing that Christ's light and the connection to God it provides were available to all. For the Early Quakers, this was the single most important principle to be understood by the general public, the one which defined the Early Quakers and was most misunderstood by those on the outside of the movement. This

¹⁴⁷ Barclay, *An Apology for the True Christian Divinity*, 96.

¹⁴⁸ Barclay, *An Apology for the True Christian Divinity*, 96.

¹⁴⁹ Nayler, *Love to the Lost*, 4-5.

¹⁵⁰ Burrough, *Declaration of Faith*, 4.

was the fundamental message behind the actions of ‘Valiant Sixty’, the one that Early Quakers most actively tried to express to the general public.

All four works discuss the role of men and women within the church. Nayler states that the ‘light of Christ...is one in the male and in the female,’¹⁵¹ showing that he firmly believed in the equality of men and women in the Early Quaker movement. Burrough is more ambiguous, stating ‘we believe...that Subjects ought to obey them in the Lord that have Rule over them...and Wives their Husbands,’¹⁵² showing that his view of Early Quakerism did have a place for more traditional social hierarchy. However, he also states:

But where Rulers, Parents, Masters...commanded or required subjection in anything which is contrary to God, or not according to him, in such cases all people are free, and ought to obey God rather than man; and we believe that herein God will justify them, being guided and led by his spirit in all that which is good, and out of all that is evil.¹⁵³

It is clear that Burrough views the Early Quakers as having the ability to use their access to the Light and its guidance to reject those commands that run counter to this guidance.¹⁵⁴

As Mack shows, Barclay’s work was written to help impose order on the movement.

She explains that Barclay’s work:

affirmed the freedom of all Friends to speak and prophesy as they were moved but maintained ‘that some are more particularly called to the work of the *ministry*...whose work is more constantly and particularly to instruct, exhort, admonish, oversee, and watch over their brethren.’ Thus, Friends had established...distinct parameters of ecstatic behavior.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵¹ Nayler, *Love to the Lost*, 2

¹⁵² Burrough, *Declaration of Faith*, 7.

¹⁵³ Burrough, *Declaration of Faith*, 7.

¹⁵⁴ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 105-106.

¹⁵⁵ Mack, *Visionary Women*, 284.

For her and others, such as Tarter,¹⁵⁶ Barclay's work was one of control being imposed on those aspects of the Quaker movement that were too controversial to remain central to Early Quaker theology.

These four works provide a picture of those characteristics that made up the Early Quaker movement. Nayler's work, having been used to help initially recruit individuals into the movement, shows those ideas that resonated amongst those first Quakers. Burrough's work is more of an explanation of what the Early Quakers believed and an attempt to systematically lay out those beliefs. It allows for a more detailed understanding of what the Early Quakers actually believed, as opposed to Nayler's work, which was what people wanted the Early Quakers to believe, and Fox's work, which was a prescription on what the Early Quakers should believe. When compared with Fox's *Some Principles*, Barclay's *Apology* is an outgrowth of a more mature movement, one that had changed with the events between the publication of each work, such as the Restoration and the increased persecution of the Quakers.¹⁵⁷ It was the Early Quakers' ability to adapt to circumstances that allowed them to continue to thrive as other contemporary sects fell by the wayside.¹⁵⁸ By using these four works, one can discern many different characteristics that existed within the Early Quaker movement.

2.4. Identifying the Characteristics of Early Quakers

This thesis draws upon various sources to identify the characteristics that define the Early Quaker movement and to distinguish it from other contemporaneous movements. In

¹⁵⁶ Tarter, 'Go North!', 93.

¹⁵⁷ As in Section 2.5.4.

¹⁵⁸ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 221-228.

their work, both Spencer¹⁵⁹ and Moore¹⁶⁰ establish lists of characteristics that defined the Early Quakers. They are the only scholars to attempt a systematic outline defining characteristics, which in turn helped inform the definitions for this dissertation. In their studies of early Quakerism, Spencer¹⁶¹ and Moore¹⁶² reach different conclusions as to the characteristics that were emblematic of the Early Quaker movement.¹⁶³ Their respective lists outline those aspects that were inherently Quaker and that set the Early Quakers apart from other religious sects of 17th-century Britain. The theories of Spencer and Moore are detailed below, followed by the author's own theory, culminating in the author's list of defining characteristics of the Early Quakers.

2.4.1. Carole Spencer

For Spencer, the defining characteristic of the Early Quaker movement was 'holiness,' or 'a spiritual quality in which human life is ordered and lived out as to be consciously centered *in* God.'¹⁶⁴ She argues that 'different interpretations of holiness characterize subsequent traditions of Quakerism.'¹⁶⁵ From this deep-rooted holiness arose the peculiarities that have defined Quakerism throughout its history, giving the early movement its shape and a construct around which future generations could develop the 'hedge'¹⁶⁶ that separated Quakerism from the rest of society. For Spencer, the increasingly rigid structures imposed on the local meetings by the central Quaker leadership in London can be directly traced to the Quaker understanding of holiness and the transformative effect of 'turning to the

¹⁵⁹ See: Spencer, *Holiness: The Soul of Quakerism*, 14–33; Spencer, 'Holiness: The Quaker Way to Perfection,' 154–160.

¹⁶⁰ Moore, 'Second Appendix,' in *The Light in Their Consciences*, 238–239.

¹⁶¹ Spencer, 'Holiness: The Quaker Way to Perfection,' 153–154.

¹⁶² Moore, 'Second Appendix,' in *The Light in Their Consciences*, 236–240.

¹⁶³ This author's views will be discussed below in Section 2.4.4.

¹⁶⁴ Spencer, 'Holiness: The Quaker Way to Perfection,' 151.

¹⁶⁵ Spencer, 'Holiness: The Quaker Way to Perfection,' 150.

¹⁶⁶ For a discussion of the hedge and its repercussions, see: Section 1.3.1, footnote 51.

Light,¹⁶⁷ which led the Early Quakers to seek a form of ‘perfection,’ both spiritually and in their everyday lives.¹⁶⁸ The Early Quaker pursuit of ‘perfection’ was one of the main factors in the reordering by George Fox and other Quaker leaders that was known as the ‘Gospel Ordering,’¹⁶⁹ of the Society of Friends.

The pursuit of ‘perfection’ is one of eight main characteristics of holiness present in early Quakerism that Spencer argues are the defining characteristics of early Quakerism:

1. *Scripture*¹⁷⁰ – For Spencer the Early Quakers had a ‘thoroughly biblical vision [where] the Bible was authoritative,’¹⁷¹ meaning that they viewed the Bible as an authority but not the *final* authority. She also concludes that ‘the way [the Early Quakers] understood the Bible was closer to that of the early church than to Reformation Biblicism,’¹⁷² speaking to the more fluid nature of scriptural interpretation found in the early church.
2. *Eschatology*¹⁷³ – Spencer states, ‘Quakers...initially anticipated the imminent Second Coming of Christ,’¹⁷⁴ hoping to prepare to world for Christ to walk again. Spencer concludes that ‘when it did not happen literally they recognized that Christ had come again spiritually within each person.’¹⁷⁵ This was the beginning of the Early Quaker belief in a ‘spiritual eschatology’ over a ‘realized’ one.

¹⁶⁷ ‘Turning to the Light’ is the first step in the early Quaker conversion experience, wherein a person experiences for the first time the presence of the Light of God inside themselves, opening their minds and bodies to completely allow the presence of God to be felt in their everyday life.

¹⁶⁸ Spencer, ‘Holiness: The Quaker Way to Perfection,’ 159.

¹⁶⁹ For a description of Fox’s ‘Gospel Ordering’, see: Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 129, 227.

¹⁷⁰ Spencer, *Holiness: The Soul of Quakerism*, 15–16.

¹⁷¹ Spencer, ‘Holiness: The Quaker Way to Perfection,’ 153.

¹⁷² Spencer, ‘Holiness: The Quaker Way to Perfection,’ 153.

¹⁷³ Spencer, *Holiness: The Soul of Quakerism*, 17.

¹⁷⁴ Spencer, ‘Holiness: The Quaker Way to Perfection,’ 153.

¹⁷⁵ Spencer, ‘Holiness: The Quaker Way to Perfection,’ 153.

3. *Conversion*¹⁷⁶ – Spencer contends that the Early Quakers were ‘born again, the old self died and a new self was born again.’¹⁷⁷ Conversion became a central facet of the Society that all Early Quakers were expected to experience.
4. *Charisma*¹⁷⁸ – Spencer argues that the Early Quakers were ‘enthusiasts, they were spirit-filled and spirit led.’¹⁷⁹ They viewed their actions as being driven by the ‘Holy Spirit,’ which filled them with the impetus for action.
5. *Evangelistic*¹⁸⁰ – To Spencer, the Early Quakers were ‘strongly evangelistic and prophetic,’¹⁸¹ and, when this trait was combined with their charisma, they felt compelled to preach the ‘good news to the poor, denouncing oppression, both spiritual and social,’¹⁸² leading them into conflict with the authorities. This evangelical spirit ‘compelled [Early Quakers] to spread their spiritual discoveries around the world,’¹⁸³ as witnessed by the itinerant preaching of the Valiant Sixty.¹⁸⁴
6. *Suffering*¹⁸⁵ – Spencer observes that the Early Quakers were ‘persecuted and martyred, imitating Christ by joyfully bearing the cross.’¹⁸⁶ This suffering was one of the hallmarks of the Early Quaker movement, and it provided a central point around which the movement was able to rally.

¹⁷⁶ Spencer, *Holiness: The Soul of Quakerism*, 18–22.

¹⁷⁷ Spencer, ‘Holiness: The Quaker Way to Perfection,’ 153.

¹⁷⁸ Spencer, *Holiness: The Soul of Quakerism*, 23–26.

¹⁷⁹ Spencer, ‘Holiness: The Quaker Way to Perfection,’ 153.

¹⁸⁰ Spencer, *Holiness: The Soul of Quakerism*, 22–23.

¹⁸¹ Spencer, ‘Holiness: The Quaker Way to Perfection,’ 153.

¹⁸² Spencer, ‘Holiness: The Quaker Way to Perfection,’ 153.

¹⁸³ Spencer, ‘Holiness: The Quaker Way to Perfection,’ 153.

¹⁸⁴ See: Section 2.5.6.

¹⁸⁵ Spencer, *Holiness: The Soul of Quakerism*, 27–28.

¹⁸⁶ Spencer, ‘Holiness: The Quaker Way to Perfection,’ 153.

7. *Mysticism*¹⁸⁷ – To Spencer, there was no doubt that the Early Quakers ‘were mystical. Knowledge of God came through direct experience,’¹⁸⁸ and could only be obtained by the individual, not through rote practice of dogma or liturgy. This approach was ‘apophatic, an approach to God beyond images and words,’¹⁸⁹ and key to the Early Quaker concept of spirituality.
8. *Perfection*¹⁹⁰ – Spencer posits that Quakers ‘experienced divine indwelling,’¹⁹¹ feeling the presence of Christ within.¹⁹² This experience led Quakers to search for a level of spiritual perfection within their everyday lives.

As Spencer’s research shows, Early Quakers ‘blended elements from many prior traditions... [and] all can be found in earlier forms of spiritual life, and in many other radical groups of the time.’¹⁹³ Quakers, as can be expected, had drawn on their experiences and shared understanding of theological thought to create a belief structure that was an amalgamation of the various forms present in their surroundings. Yet, Spencer contends that ‘the constellation of all eight elements, combined, form[ed] the uniqueness of Quaker holiness and differentiates Quakerism from other movements and subsequent holiness traditions.’¹⁹⁴ Early Quakers drew upon these essential elements to create their unique form of worship.

For Spencer, the Early Quaker experience was a life radically altered by the conversion experience.¹⁹⁵ Once individuals were ‘turned to the Light,’ they became obligated

¹⁸⁷ Spencer, *Holiness: The Soul of Quakerism*, 28–32.

¹⁸⁸ Spencer, ‘Holiness: The Quaker Way to Perfection,’ 153.

¹⁸⁹ Spencer, ‘Holiness: The Quaker Way to Perfection,’ 153.

¹⁹⁰ Spencer, *Holiness: The Soul of Quakerism*, 32–33.

¹⁹¹ Spencer, ‘Holiness: The Quaker Way to Perfection,’ 154.

¹⁹² Spencer, ‘Holiness: The Quaker Way to Perfection,’ 153–154.

¹⁹³ Spencer, ‘Holiness: The Quaker Way to Perfection,’ 154.

¹⁹⁴ Spencer, ‘Holiness: The Quaker Way to Perfection,’ 154.

¹⁹⁵ Spencer, ‘Holiness: The Quaker Way to Perfection,’ 154.

to participate in the corporate aspects of worship as well as to attend to their own spiritual leadings.¹⁹⁶ Through conversion, their lives were defined by the experience of ‘holiness’ amongst the gathered Friends. The lives of the Early Quakers were spent in constant spiritual journey, as evidenced by the personal writings. This journey, often vacillating between spiritual torment and complete ecstasy, could only be undertaken in the safety of the gathered community, for although ‘the conversion experience generally happened individually and privately for each person, perfection, the process of ever-deepening intimacy with God, took place within the church, the community of the convinced.’¹⁹⁷ The belief that individual perfection could only be fully attained within a gathered group of like-minded individuals was ‘unlike other individualistic radical groups, who taught perfectionist doctrine,’ leading ‘Quakers [to be] concerned about both individual rebirth and the rebirth of the true church.’¹⁹⁸ The seemingly impossible task of reconciling the individual and the corporate was, in many ways, the initial impetus for the first Quakers to leave the Established Churches and form their own spiritual community. Once gathered together, the ‘seeking of perfection as both a mystical process and an ordered way of life within the spiritual community became a distinguishing characteristic which set Quakers apart from Puritans and other radical religious movements of their day.’¹⁹⁹

Spencer’s work suffers in several ways. She does not pay adequate attention to the political landscape, focusing more on the spiritual side. For her, the Quaker experience in relationship to society at large and the defense of Quakerism in the political realms are not as important as those within the community itself. For her, the Quaker pursuit of perfection is at

¹⁹⁶ Spencer, ‘Holiness: The Quaker Way to Perfection,’ 160.

¹⁹⁷ Spencer, ‘Holiness: The Quaker Way to Perfection,’ 160.

¹⁹⁸ Spencer, ‘Holiness: The Quaker Way to Perfection,’ 160.

¹⁹⁹ Spencer, ‘Holiness: The Quaker Way to Perfection,’ 160.

the heart of the movement, and the definition of perfection was informed mostly by the community and not by outside influences. This focus on the pursuit of perfection at times paints the Early Quakers as more uniform than other research has shown them to be, ignoring the influences that some of the other early leaders, such as Nayler, had on the movement.

2.4.2. Rosemary Moore

Although drawing on source material similar to Spencer, Moore comes to a significantly different conclusion as to the characteristics of early Quakerism in *The Light in Their Consciences*. Moore explores the correspondence between the Orthodox and the ‘fringe’ elements of early Quakerism, focusing on the role played by these two branches in shaping modern Quakerism.

Moore posits that, although George Fox is often considered the founder of Quakerism, this may have more to do with the fact that he was the longest lived of the first truly powerful leaders of Quakerism.²⁰⁰ By 1669, Nayler, Farnworth, and Howgill had all passed on, leaving Fox to fully imprint his views regarding the Gospel Ordering.²⁰¹ However, the early literature reveals that, in the first years of the Quaker movement, there were numerous leaders, all contributing the knowledge and insight they had gained from their experiences prior to coming to Quakerism.²⁰² Moore’s work focuses on the different strains that influenced the Early Quakers. For Moore, there is a stark difference between the earliest period of Quakerism and those that came later. For Moore, the end of the first period starts in 1658, when the Quakers began to recognize the right for other spiritual groups to exist.²⁰³

²⁰⁰ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 227.

²⁰¹ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 227.

²⁰² Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 23-25, 31-33.

²⁰³ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 131-133.

This trend was accelerated throughout the end of the 1650s and into the 1660s, culminating in the publication of 'The Testimony of the Brethren' in 1666.²⁰⁴

Moore shows that, with the restoration of the monarchy, sects that had enjoyed some measure of freedom under Cromwell and the Parliamentarians were now viewed with suspicion.²⁰⁵ Some groups, such as the Fifth Monarchy Men, were openly hostile to the restored monarchy, viewing it as an impediment to the imminent return of Christ.²⁰⁶ Loyalists to the king viewed other sects, such as the Quakers, as having the same antimonarchical perspective and goals as these groups.²⁰⁷ The Quaker leadership felt it was incumbent for them to separate themselves from those groups that were openly hostile to the monarchy. With the Restoration, Quakers begin to publish specific declarations, such as the Peace Testimony, outlining their beliefs. Through documents such as 'The Testimony of the Brethren,' a formal outline of what it meant to be Quaker began to emerge.²⁰⁸ It was at this time, Moore concludes, that 'the charismatic Quaker movement had ended, and was being replaced by the Religious Society of Friends.'²⁰⁹

In an appendix to *The Light in Their Consciences*,²¹⁰ Moore highlights seven important questions she considered when examining the works of Early Quakers:

1. How is salvation effected for the individual?

For Moore, 'this was mainly concerned with the Quaker experience and its consequences for belief,'²¹¹ in that many of the Early Quaker works, both public and private,

²⁰⁴ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 224-226.

²⁰⁵ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 215.

²⁰⁶ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 72.

²⁰⁷ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 170-172.

²⁰⁸ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 224-225.

²⁰⁹ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 228.

²¹⁰ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 238.

²¹¹ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 238.

dealt with the Quaker experience of God in the present. These works ‘include[d] their conception of God and the work of Christ,’²¹² in an attempt to more thoroughly outline their personal experiences for public consumption.²¹³

2. *What is the eschatological standpoint?*

Moore looks ‘for evidence as to whether the “end-times” were thought to be present or beginning, or to be wholly in the future.’²¹⁴ She views the Early Quakers’ continued redefinition of their eschatological viewpoint as one of the most interesting and important characteristics of Early Quaker theology. Moore states that, for Early Quakers, the end-times could ‘be both present and future,’²¹⁵ again highlighting the fluid nature of the Early Quaker theology.²¹⁶

3. *How does the publication regard the Church, the saved community?*

Moore explains that Early Quaker publications were ‘concerned both with positive views, the nature of the Quaker community, and with negative views, what was considered to be wrong with the established church and other religious groups.’²¹⁷ Moore recognizes that the Early Quakers were dually concerned with what was *right* with their sect and *wrong* with everyone else.

4. *What does it say about the conduct of worship?*

²¹² Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 238.

²¹³ For a more detailed discussion, see: Moore, Chapters 6 ‘Putting Experience into Words,’ 75-87, and 8 ‘Serious Theology,’ 98-114, in *The Light in Their Consciences*.

²¹⁴ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 238.

²¹⁵ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 238.

²¹⁶ For a more detailed discussion, see: Moore, Chapter 5 ‘The Kingdom of the Lord,’ 60-74, in *The Light in Their Consciences*.

²¹⁷ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 238. This issue is explored in detail in Chapters 1, 10, and 11.

Moore states that ‘as with question 3, this included [discussions of] both positive and negative aspects,’²¹⁸ of the Quaker worship experience. The worship experience was set against those of the Established Church. It reflects the Early Quaker concern with the correct conduct of worship by contrasting their worship with what was incorrect about non-Quaker worship.

5. *What use is made of the Bible, and what view is taken of the Bible?*

Moore concludes that the Early Quakers had a unique view of the place of the Bible. She explains that, although the Early Quakers used biblical imagery in their writings, they had a unique interpretation of the actual meaning of that imagery; that is, the difference between the ‘letter’ of the Bible and the ‘spirit’ of its message.²¹⁹

6. *What does it say about the way of life of believers?*

Moore has a strong interest in ‘the personal consequences of becoming a Quaker.’²²⁰ To her, the fact that the Early Quakers worked to express their personal trials and spiritual journeys publically was an attempt to define themselves, both within and outside of the movement. She notes that, for some, this included suffering, for some, unpleasantness, and for ‘some individuals, the call to public witness,’²²¹ of their spiritual leadings.

7. *Does it have anything to say about government and civil law?*

The Early Quakers’ confrontations with the authorities played a significant part in defining the sect.²²² Moore notes that ‘in the course of [her] study, it became clear that the

²¹⁸ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 238.

²¹⁹ Moore, Chapter 4 in *The Light in Their Consciences*.

²²⁰ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 238.

²²¹ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 238, Chapters 9, and 12.

²²² Moore, Chapters 5 and 13 in *The Light in Their Consciences*.

Quakers' eschatology varied according to their current relations with the government.'²²³

Thus, there is a close relationship between Moore's second question and this final question.

Although these questions are in a format different from the 'defining characteristics' that Spencer discusses, they illuminate those facets of Early Quakerism that Moore views as defining the Early Quakers. For her, these are the topics that Early Quakers were most often discussing in their writings, and thus the topics they held as important.²²⁴ Moore's work suffers from a focus on the impact political and social forces had on the Early Quakers, at times neglecting the spiritual changes that were occurring concurrently. For example, to Moore, the adoption of the peace testimony was primarily political motivated to placate a hostile monarchy, not a spiritual development within the movement itself.

2.4.3. Comparison of Moore and Spencer

Moore and Spencer recognize that the attempts of Fox and the other Early Quaker leaders to create a standard set of practices for the Quaker movement, the 'Gospel Ordering' of the church, was an effort to impose on the entire society the same perfection that an individual achieved when 'turned to the Light.'²²⁵ However, whereas Spencer sees this effort at 'right ordering' as motivated by a desire to define a life lived in holiness,²²⁶ Moore argues that it stemmed more from a need to present a united front to an increasingly hostile outside world.²²⁷ For Moore, a desire to avoid publicly embarrassing schisms over meeting conduct

²²³ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 238.

²²⁴ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 238.

²²⁵ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 129; Spencer, 'Holiness: The Quaker Way to Perfection,' 151.

²²⁶ Spencer, *Holiness: The Soul of Quakerism*, 89-90.

²²⁷ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 132-133.

led to the censorship of certain tracts, resulting in a dual system of ‘public’ printings and ‘private,’ Society-only publications.²²⁸

Whereas Spencer perceives holiness as driving Quakers to create a code of conduct,²²⁹ the Quakers’ claim to perfection is problematic for Moore, inasmuch as the public repercussions of the James Nayler²³⁰ and Rhys Jones²³¹ incidents were used by anti-Quaker detractors as an example of the falseness of Quakers. Moore highlights the issue with perfection when she outlines the various public battles Quakers had with their enemies, as well as their private writings.²³²

For Spencer, this striving for holiness, specifically the ‘perfection’ aspect of it, was an integral part of the early Quaker experience, something they would have ecstatically expressed in sermons, letters, public debates, and private discourse.²³³ Moore’s concern is that this public declaration resulted in an internal clamping down and subsequent creation of a ‘fringe’ element of early Quakerism, which, in turn, led to the dampening of much of the early, charismatic sentiment of the movement.²³⁴

The contrasting work of Moore and Spencer helps to illustrate the tension inherent in early Quakerism, specifically finding a balance between an individual’s leadings and the needs of the gathered community of worshipers. This thesis posits that what defines early Quakerism is the effort to balance these needs by sacrificing expressions of individual belief for the need of a strong, supportive community. Early Quakers left the established religious communities because of the inability of these groups to fulfill the spiritual needs of the

²²⁸ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 187.

²²⁹ Spencer, *Holiness: The Soul of Quakerism*, 90.

²³⁰ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 43.

²³¹ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 116.

²³² Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 88–97.

²³³ Spencer, ‘Holiness: The Quaker Way to Perfection,’ 150.

²³⁴ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 224–225.

individual, forcing the Early Quakers to 'seek' out a remedy to their spiritual crisis. Once gathered together, these Early Quakers sought out a path to continue their spiritual journeys corporately by founding a community that would give them the freedom to pursue their specific spiritual leadings with the support of like-minded people.

Moore and Spencer agree that the Quaker leadership worked to oppress or eradicate forms of dissent deemed unacceptable to their goal of the Gospel Ordering of the community. However, Spencer views the impetus for the Gospel Ordering as coming from the Quaker understanding of perfection as it relates to their concept of Holiness.²³⁵ It was a spiritual quest, to help bring all members of the Quaker community into the same measure of the Light, and it was viewed as necessary for the survival of the entire Quaker community to remove those who would disrupt it with their inability to walk within the Light.²³⁶ For Spencer, the early Quaker leadership was less concerned with the public perception of Quakers than maintaining the ability of meaningful corporate worship. By contrast, for Moore, the need to protect the public persona of Quakerism, the pursuit of legitimacy in the eyes of the common man as well as the restored monarchy, was the driving force behind the Gospel Ordering.²³⁷

2.4.4. This Author's Views

This dissertation contends that Quakerism can best be understood as a community defined by its attempt to reconcile the leadings of the individual and the need to maintain some form of corporate harmony within the community as a whole. The Early Quakers have left a large body of personal literature expressing the intense feeling of seeking and despair

²³⁵ Spencer, 'Holiness: The Quaker Way to Perfection,' 159.

²³⁶ Spencer, 'Holiness: The Quaker Way to Perfection,' 159.

²³⁷ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 224.

many individuals felt prior to joining with one another.²³⁸ One can also clearly discern the joy they felt once they joined the Quaker movement and were free to pursue their spiritual leadings while being supported by the rest of the community. However, as evidenced in public and private writings,²³⁹ Quakers felt great pain when there was dissent and disorder within their spiritual community, for it called into question one of their fundamental tenants, that of perfection of both the individual and the community. How could the Quakers claim spiritual and communal perfection when they suffered from internal dispute? How could listening to the light, particularly in the act of communal worship, lead the ‘true church of the convinced’ to be divided? These questions were persistently asked by Quakers (as a means of self-examination) and by Quaker detractors as proof positive of the falseness of the Quaker message. This thesis shows that the Quaker experience can be defined as an attempt to mitigate these two factors.

The following list of defining characteristics of Early Quakers emerges from this author’s analysis:

1. *Conversion* – The Early Quakers all came to the movement from outside it, experiencing a conversion process. As Spencer,²⁴⁰ Moore,²⁴¹ and Gwyn,²⁴² observe, the Early Quaker movement, by necessity, was made up of people converted to the movement. This conversion experience was often marked by deep unrest and spiritual torment, a fact that engendered sympathetic feelings for one another amongst the Early Quakers.

²³⁸ See: Barbour and Roberts, *Early Quaker Writings*.

²³⁹ Barbour and Roberts, *Early Quaker Writings*, 68.

²⁴⁰ Spencer, ‘Holiness: The Quaker Way to Perfection,’ 153.

²⁴¹ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 75-88.

²⁴² Gwyn, *Apocalypse of the Word*, 151.

2. *Seeking* – The first generation of Quakerism was marked by a generally held notion of being on a spiritual quest of ‘seeking the truth’ and a belief that Quakerism had provided them with a place to continue that quest communally. This belief in ‘seeking,’ of being on a continuing spiritual quest in which new insights were open for discussion (if not adoption),²⁴³ ultimately spawned the theological idea of ‘Continual Revelation’²⁴⁴ in later generations of Quakers. The Early Quaker idea of an ‘Immediate Revelation,’ where the presence of God is found in one’s daily life, gave these seekers the sense that their spiritual quest had come to an end.²⁴⁵
3. *Walking in the Light (Conformity of Conduct)* – Early Quakers enforced an increasingly strict code of conduct, prescribing right action in all aspects of life, both private and public. Early Quakers were required to submit to the will of the Meeting, or be forced out. After the James Nayler incident²⁴⁶ and the Restoration, it became even more important for Quakers to conform to a single code of conduct in the hope of presenting a unified voice to the outside world.²⁴⁷
4. *Eschatology* – The first generation of Quakers came together in an era when much of society firmly believed in a literal second coming of Christ on earth, leading many individuals to act against those societal institutions that were believed to be inhibiting the Christ’s return . When this world-altering event failed to materialize, Quakers internalized their eschatology, turning it into a spiritual rebirth or ‘realized

²⁴³ See: Perrot in Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 194–196.

²⁴⁴ Spencer, ‘Holiness: The Quaker Way to Perfection,’ 154–155.

²⁴⁵ Gwyn, *Seekers Found*, 75.

²⁴⁶ The ‘Nayler Incident’ has been outlined in many different works, because it was one of the most formative events for the Early Quaker movement. See: Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 35–48; Neelon, *James Nayler*, 145–156; Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down*, 249–250.

²⁴⁷ Tarter, ‘Go North!’ 90; Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 137.

eschatology,²⁴⁸ in the second generation of Quakers. Within this internalization, the Quakers maintained that the presence of Christ was a real presence within the individual and not necessarily the physical return of Christ.

5. *Suffering* – Throughout early Quaker history, the sect was substantially defined through the suffering Early Quakers endured. Suffering was to be endured not only stoically, but also with the joy of bearing a burden somewhat like that experienced by Christ on the cross. The suffering was not just a form of external persecution, but was also spiritual in nature. This ‘spiritual suffering’ stemmed mainly from the periods of ‘conversion’ and ‘seeking’ that many individuals had undergone, but it also arose from moments of corporate spiritual crisis.²⁴⁹
6. *Charismatic/Evangelical* – The Early Quakers’ experiences of suffering and the joy resulting from that suffering, led them to be both charismatic and evangelical. They went out into the world to proclaim their message and to chronicle the path to spiritual joy they had achieved.²⁵⁰ This led the Early Quakers into conflict with those sects who held to the traditional path, and that conflict reinforced the suffering inflicted on the Early Quakers.²⁵¹
7. *Spirit-Led* – First-generation Quakers were enthusiastic, spirit-filled, and spirit-led. They experienced a strong, personal connection to God, often referred to as ‘the Inward Light.’²⁵² This ‘Inward Light’ led many Early Quakers to be evangelistic and

²⁴⁸ Spencer, ‘Holiness: The Quaker Way to Perfection,’ 154.

²⁴⁹ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences* 157-161; Spencer ‘Holiness: The Quaker Way to Perfection,’

157.

²⁵⁰ Spencer, ‘Holiness: The Quaker Way to Perfection,’ 156–157.

²⁵¹ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 180–193.

²⁵² Gwyn, *Apocalypse of the Word*, 98.

prophetic, because they felt compelled to spread ‘good news’ around the world in mission.

8. *Mystical* – The Early Quakers had an intensely strong and personal connection to God, feeling his presence in and around them at all times.²⁵³ The Quaker beliefs in an ‘Immediate Revelation’ of God’s presence in the ‘Inward Light’ that was available to all were facets of a mystical tradition that contributed significantly to the appeal of the early Quaker movement.²⁵⁴
9. *Leveling* – Many Early Quakers concluded that a leveling of society was necessary to achieve a degree of paradise on Earth. The belief in the presence of the ‘Inward Light’ in each person caused the Early Quakers to speak for the equality of classes and genders in society at large. Early Quakers ‘believed that that they were “called” to recreate society as God intended.’²⁵⁵
10. *The Bible* – The early Quaker view of the Bible had aspects that were both traditional and unique. Early Quakers viewed the Bible as the word of God, authoritative on describing what the apostolic era was like and an accurate description of God’s time here on Earth.²⁵⁶ However, because the Early Quakers believed that God’s presence on Earth was not restricted to the apostolic era, they did not view the Bible as the final word on experiencing God in one’s life.²⁵⁷ As Gwyn states, ‘Fox denied the scripture to be the *Word* of God, and touchstone of doctrine, but instead affirmed it to be the

²⁵³ Spencer, ‘Holiness: The Quaker Way to Perfection,’ 158–159.

²⁵⁴ Rufus M. Jones, *Spiritual Reformers in the 16th and 17th Centuries* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2005[1914]), 14.

²⁵⁵ Pilgrim, ‘*Taming Anarchy*,’ 210.

²⁵⁶ Fox, Section 10 ‘On The Scriptures,’ in *Some Principles of the Elect People*, 15-16.

²⁵⁷ Gwyn, *Apocalypse of the Word*, 31.

words which God inspired the prophets and apostles to write, the *record* of the Word's dealings in the world.²⁵⁸

11. *Primitive Christianity Restored* – The Early Quakers attempted to restore the relationship between God and each individual from that represented by the Established Church to that represented in the Scriptures.²⁵⁹ They viewed the accumulation of church hierarchy and dogma as leading people away from experiencing God within, as was experienced in the times of the Apostles.²⁶⁰

2.5. The Characteristics of Early Quakerism

In the following discussion of the defining characteristics, it is important to appreciate that, as Pilgrim states, 'few, if any, of the beliefs which became central tenets of Quakerism were unique.'²⁶¹ Most of those beliefs can be found in one form or another in many of the other sects in 17th-century England. However, Pilgrim concludes that 'what Fox and the early Quakers did was to bring them together in a cohesive way.'²⁶² This created a constellation of beliefs that were represented in other sects but that combined to form a unique vision within the Quaker movement.

2.5.1. Conversion

For the earliest Quakers, a central defining characteristic of their faith was the Conversion (or Convincement) experience.²⁶³ Nearly all of the first generation of Early Quakers had a profound, life-altering experience that led them to seek out and join together

²⁵⁸ Gwyn, *Apocalypse of the Word*, 31.

²⁵⁹ Gwyn, *Seekers Found*, 302-303.

²⁶⁰ Gwyn, *Seekers Found*, 302-303.

²⁶¹ Pilgrim, 'Taming Anarchy,' 210.

²⁶² Pilgrim, 'Taming Anarchy,' 210.

²⁶³ Spencer, 'Holiness: The Quaker Way to Perfection,' 155; Gwyn, *Seekers Found*, 225.

with others to form a religious community.²⁶⁴ Whether spiritual or mystical, logical or emotional, all Quakers went through a conversion experience, to the point that ‘Friends... believed as emphatically as the Puritans in the absolute necessity of conversion’ to experience a true religious awakening.²⁶⁵ The knowledge that everyone went through a similar period of trial and conversion formed the foundation of Quaker society, and created a sense of belonging and normalcy based on the comfort of knowing that other Quakers had a common experience with that individual.

The Quakers used the term Convincement to represent this conversion:

Convincement, or ‘conviction’ in its original 17th-century sense, was the name given to a two-stage experience common among the first Quakers. Initially, the Light would reveal a person’s sins and he or she would be convicted of them. The same Light, however, would then set this person free from sin and release him or her into a new and renewed intimacy with God... ‘Conviction’ and ‘conversion’ are used to describe a spiritual process involving the relationship of the individual with God.²⁶⁶

The Quaker use of the term ‘Convincement’ to articulate this experience, along with its prominence in the earliest Quaker writings, shows how important the conversion experience was to the first generation of Quakers. As Spencer shows, ‘Quaker conversion was a dramatic, intense and life-changing experience. “Born again”, “new man” or “new creation” were the terms most often employed.’²⁶⁷ Spencer also concludes that the ‘Quaker term for conversion, “convincement,” is rather misleading because convincement was not so much a changing of the mind, but a dramatic heart-change, more physical than cognitive.’²⁶⁸

Distinctive Quaker thinking about conversion starts from the fact that individual Quakers had resolved their spiritual struggles in a way quite unlike the Puritans. ‘Most Early

²⁶⁴ Spencer, ‘Holiness: The Quaker Way to Perfection,’ 155.

²⁶⁵ Vann, *Social Development*, 38.

²⁶⁶ Margery Post Abbott, et al., *The A to Z of the Friends (Quakers)* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2006), 63.

²⁶⁷ Spencer, ‘Holiness: The Quaker Way to Perfection,’ 155.

²⁶⁸ Spencer, ‘Holiness: The Quaker Way to Perfection,’ 155.

Quakers had already had one or several conversion experiences, which had turned out to be deceptive. Many Early Quakers dreaded the consciousness of sin, which the Puritans considered wholesome and necessary.²⁶⁹ They therefore sought a communion with God so deep that it might be called ‘continuous conversion’ and they rejected the claim of some sects to find the assurance of salvation in a moment of grace that could be precisely dated and described for the edification of other Christians.²⁷⁰

Like the first Christian converts, who could not have been born Christian, the first Quakers identified with the fact that they were all convinced from some other theological point of view. Punshon points out that for ‘those who first came to it [Quakerism], it provided an experience of the Christian faith like no other they had known ... Nowhere did they find rest for their souls until they heard and responded to the first Quaker preachers.’²⁷¹

As described by Barbour and Roberts, the Early Quakers, like the Puritans, ‘stressed [the] conversion experience as the clearest of many events in which they had seen God’s grace work in their lives.’²⁷² For example, Isaac Penington’s *Account of His Spiritual Travels* illustrates his despair, followed by the joy he felt through his conversion experience. Penington states that he had ‘been a man of sorrow and affliction from [his] childhood, feeling the want of the Lord and mourning after him.’²⁷³ This spiritual longing marked his youth and early adulthood, making him ‘sick at heart indeed, and set [Penington] upon deep crying to God, and close searching of the scriptures, and waiting on God that [Penington]

²⁶⁹ Vann, *Social Development* 32-33.

²⁷⁰ Vann, quoted in John Henry Ferguson, *Politics Quaker Style* (San Bernardino, CA: Borgo Press, 1995), 59.

²⁷¹ Punshon, *Portrait in Grey*, 34.

²⁷² Barbour and Roberts, *Early Quaker Writings*, 151.

²⁷³ Testimony of Thomas Ellwood in *The Works of the Long Mournful and Sorely Distressed Isaac Penington*, (London, UK: B. Clark for J. and T. Kendall, 1761), 3

might receive the pure sense and understanding,²⁷⁴ of the nature of God. When he finally came upon the Quaker movement and attended one of their meetings, he was filled with a newfound spiritual joy, one that caused his own personal conviction.²⁷⁵

Some conversion experiences were ecstatic, such as that of Martha Simmonds,²⁷⁶ whereas others were more philosophical, such as those of Anthony Pearson²⁷⁷ or William Penn.²⁷⁸ Ultimately, the Early Quaker had to ‘turn to the Light,’ and in doing so, be convinced. As Fox stated:

And this is the Light, in which Light you see all your Evil Actions, you have *evilly* acted; and all your ungodly deeds you have ungodlily committed; and all your ungodly thoughts you have ungodlily thought, & all your hard ungodly speeches you have spoken; The *Light* which Christ hath Enlightened you withall, is that which makes manifest all that is contrary to it; The same *Light* makes manifest the Saviour from whence it comes, And makes manifest Christ to be the Covenant of Light and Life through which you may come to have Peace with God.²⁷⁹

The concept of ‘normal’ for the first Quakers was largely rooted in one’s own personal conversion experience, leading to a vibrant society of believers.²⁸⁰ The shape of the conversion experience mattered less than the fact that it had been experienced, and those who

²⁷⁴ Testimony of Thomas Ellwood in *The Works of the Long Mournful and Sorely Distressed Isaac Penington*, 3

²⁷⁵ Testimony of Thomas Ellwood in *The Works of the Long Mournful and Sorely Distressed Isaac Penington*, 3

²⁷⁶ Martha Simmonds, a follower of James Nayler, is often blamed for inflaming Nayler and causing him to pursue the events in Bristol, which proved to be his downfall as a leader in the Quaker movement. See: Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 39; Tarter, ‘Go North!’ 90; Neelon, *James Nayler*, 145-146, 148-149

²⁷⁷ Anthony Pearson, a Justice of the Peace, converted on the stand during the trial of James Nayler and Francis Hogwill for blasphemy in 1653. In as much as his conversion happened in court and was therefore witnessed by others. There is no report of this conversion having an ecstatic element to it, as opposed to the conversion experience of Simmonds. His conversion seems to be based on Nayler’s logical and theological arguments made on the stand rather than an ecstatic spiritual experience. Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 23; Neelon, *James Nayler*, 86–87.

²⁷⁸ William Penn, whose father was an Admiral for the Royal Navy, rejected his martial birthright for the more spiritual quest that Quakerism provided. Braithwaite, *The Beginnings of Quakerism*, 159, 288.

²⁷⁹ Fox, ‘Introduction,’ in *Some Principles of the Elect People*, 8-9.

²⁸⁰ Gwyn, *Apocalypse of the Word*, 72.

experienced the conversion recognized the extraordinary effect it had on all aspects of their lives.²⁸¹

Conversion from outside into a religious system of beliefs allows for a degree of detachment from that system, which in turn affords the converted a degree of objectivity related to the system's beliefs and practices. Because most of the Early Quakers were seekers, having passed through the different beliefs and practice systems, they were able to draw on their extensive experiences with other religions to distill those practices and beliefs into a new system that, they believed, was ultimately the correct system.²⁸² Early Quakers attempted to find a perfect form of religious beliefs in non-form, a religious sect that initially was marked by the rejection of any type of religious structure.²⁸³ For Fox:

which *Christendom* hath gone out of, going from the *Light* in their own particulars, into their own Inventions and Imaginations, which is the cause there are so many wayes amongst them; *changeable Wayes*, and *changeable Worships*...So everyone that cometh to the *Light* in their own particulars, they come to Christ, they come to the new and living Way, and from and out of the old and dead Wayes, which are in the Fall from God, out of his Image and Power.²⁸⁴

However, the rejection of structure proved too difficult to maintain, and quickly the Early Quaker leadership found it necessary to attempt to place some form of control over the growing movement. The tension between structure and non-structure was a constant facet of the Early Quaker movement and attempts to address it are central to an understanding of the Early Quakers.²⁸⁵

²⁸¹ Gwyn, *Seekers Found*, 225-226.

²⁸² Gwyn, 'Conclusion,' in *Seekers Found* 378-379.

²⁸³ Vann, *Social Development*, 26.

²⁸⁴ Fox, 'Concerning Worship,' in *Some Principles of the Elect People* 9.

²⁸⁵ Mack, *Visionary Women*, 197-211; Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 222-225.

2.5.2. Seeking

One aspect of early Quakerism that neither Spencer or Moore directly mentions is that, not only were the first Quakers converted to the movement, but, for the most part, they had all gone through long, intense spiritual journeys prior to finding fellow ‘seekers’ in the Quaker movement. Through his study of the early written materials of Quakers, Vann notes that ‘the great majority of writers—both the leaders and obscure Friends—had grown up in Puritan households and had passed into one or more of the gathered churches.’²⁸⁶ The disparate groups of seekers brought together by George Fox and the other Early Quakers had individually, as well as communally, searched, sometimes for many years, for a religious experience that held the Truth.²⁸⁷ Early Quakers were ‘people who thought that the true church did not at that time [the mid-17th century] exist, and looked back to recreate the New Testament Church or forward to the coming Kingdom of Christ.’²⁸⁸ Vann observes that, ‘This phenomenon of passing through a succession of outward professions was perfectly familiar to the early Friends themselves,’²⁸⁹ and created an experiential norm that helped to tie the Early Quakers together.

As with the conversion experience, Early Quakers chronicled their search in their writings. In his *Journal*, George Fox describes his own journey as follows:

As I had forsaken the priests, so I left the separate preachers also, and those called the most experienced people; for I saw there was none among them all that could speak to my condition. And when all my hopes in them and in all men were gone, so that I had nothing outwardly to help me, nor could tell what to do, then, Oh then, I heard a voice which said, ‘There is one, even Christ Jesus, that can speak to thy condition,’ and when I heard it my heart did leap for joy.²⁹⁰

²⁸⁶ Vann, *Social Development*, 26.

²⁸⁷ Gwyn, Chapter 8, ‘The Quakers’ Apocalypse,’ in *Seekers Found*, 213-264.

²⁸⁸ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 5.

²⁸⁹ Vann, *Social Development*, 26.

²⁹⁰ Fox, *The Journal of George Fox*, 27.

This pattern of seeking appears in the writings of other Quaker founders, such as Richard Farnworth, Margaret Fell, and James Nayler, who told of their spiritual torment prior to finding Quakerism.²⁹¹ Richard Hubberthorne, an early leader and spokesperson for the Quaker movement, expressed his own torment in *A True Testimony of Obedience to the Heavenly Call*, first printed in 1654. He eloquently states:

In my trouble I cried in the evening would God it were morning, and in the morning would God it were evening, and the terror of the Almighty being upon me, my acquaintance and familiers stood afar off me, for they knew not the power of the Lord...and the Lord raised in me a love to his word, by which all the powers of the earth did tremble, and the earth itself was shaken by it.²⁹²

For the Early Quakers, the process of ‘seeking’ the correct spiritual home by moving through various other sects and groups was one of the defining characteristics of the movement. While not shared by every member of the Early Quaker movement, it was a common occurrence, one mentioned in public and private literature as characteristic of the Early Quaker experience.²⁹³ When combined with the life-altering experience of acknowledging the presence of the Inward Light, the trajectory of going from spiritual darkness to light was at the heart of the Early Quaker experience.

Gwyn outlines how Early Quakers participated in a ‘dialect of seeking and finding, of errantry and standing still, [of] a constant conversation,’ which informed the shape of the Early Quaker process of conviction.²⁹⁴ The process of ‘errantry’—seeking out something and re-examining the journey once completed—gave the Early Quakers a sense that this journey was vital to the overall process of conviction.²⁹⁵ Coupling errantry with the opposite process of ‘standing still’ and consolidating the wisdom gained during the process of

²⁹¹ Barbour and Roberts, *Early Quaker Writings* 47-148.

²⁹² Richard Hubberthorne, *A True Testimony of Obedience to the Heavenly Call* (London, UK: s.n., 1654), 4.

²⁹³ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 75-87.

²⁹⁴ Gwyn, *Seekers Found*, 9.

²⁹⁵ Gwyn, *Seekers Found*, 8.

errantry allowed the Early Quakers to confirm the insights gained during their journeys.²⁹⁶ This dialectical process was the form most Early Quakers experienced during their time before joining the movement.

2.5.3. Walking in the Light (Conformity of Conduct)

‘Walking in the Light’, which ‘involved absolutely right conduct, a necessary consequence of the experience of the teaching light of Christ,’ could lead to suffering for the individual and the community, because these leadings put them into conflict with those who had authority in society.²⁹⁷ Fox’s *Some Principles* contains several prescriptions for right conduct, including *Good Manners* and *Marriages*.²⁹⁸ These writings detailed the way of life for the believers, the correct conduct in Meeting and private life, the way to view other sects and groups of believers, the way to approach the impending suffering one was likely to endure upon becoming a Quaker, and many other aspects of life. As Moore states, ‘right conduct acted as a substitute for formal church membership; people who did not behave according to “the light” were not part of the community,’ and their actions dictated their removal from the community.²⁹⁹ These early writings illustrate that ‘a main concern of Quaker authors was the preservation of their community,’ and from the 1650s onward, there was a concerted effort across the society to define what it meant to be a Quaker.³⁰⁰

Although George Fox was responsible for gathering together the first Quakers, there was general agreement that there were others, like Fox, who held a greater measure of the Light, and were therefore worthy of deference in matters of both personal and spiritual

²⁹⁶ Gwyn, *Seekers Found*, 8.

²⁹⁷ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 115-116.; Spencer, ‘Holiness: The Quaker Way to Perfection,’ 157–158.

²⁹⁸ Fox, Section 23, ‘Good Manners,’ 28-29; Section 31, ‘Marriages,’ 32-33 in *Some Principles of the Elect People*.

²⁹⁹ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 201.

³⁰⁰ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 201.

disagreements that arose within the movement.³⁰¹ These ‘Weighty Friends’ or ‘Elders’ were viewed as the local meeting’s leadership—not because of election or appointment, but because the sense of the Meeting was that it was spiritually correct. These were also the Friends who gathered together in London and created documents, such as the ‘Testimony of the Brethren’,³⁰² prescribing society-wide norms on right action and conduct. They also organized the traveling ministry, published vast amounts of Quaker literature, and worked to alleviate Quaker persecution and suffering. The Early Quaker leadership was seeking to create a unified body that would be able not only to withstand the trials imposed by the outside, but also to continue their spiritual quest together corporately:

By the spirit of the Living God are we gathered up together, up to God, to worship him in spirit and in truth, and are of one heart, and of one mind, and of one soul, and have all one teacher, and speak all one thing.³⁰³

However, Fox’s ‘Gospel Ordering’ was not accomplished without turmoil. The move to create more and more rigid forms and structures in worship often met with intense resistance at the local level, because these new forms would conflict with the spiritual leadings of some Quakers.³⁰⁴ Even when the action came from the local meeting’s leadership, such as the setting of specific days and times to gather together for worship, some Quakers viewed this as infringing on their personal leadings.³⁰⁵ These negative feelings, in turn, demanded a response from the Weighty Friends, which led to the formulation of more limitations and

³⁰¹ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 31–32.

³⁰² Written in May of 1666, this work (originally untitled, but traditionally known as ‘The Testimony of the Brethren’ was produced in London in response to the Perrot incident. The product of a number of influential Early Quaker leaders (notably not Fox, who was being held in Scarborough Castle at the time), this work sought to organize the movement with a more centralized leadership able to control those elements who threatened the movement with their free spirits. For more, see: Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 222–225.

³⁰³ Quote taken from a letter to Oliver Cromwell in Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 143.

³⁰⁴ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 196–197.

³⁰⁵ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 131.

prescriptions for conduct. This dynamic, this threshing out of acceptable conduct and distinguishing it from the unacceptable, helped to define the boundaries of early Quakerism.

This Gospel Ordering created the unity within the movement that helped Quakerism survive its tumultuous first years. Ultimately, the ‘Gospel Ordering’ allowed:

The means by which Quakers were to sustain this state of constancy and unity...Internally, the individual would rely on universal reason and conscience to interpret the true, uniform meaning of the inner light; externally, he or she would rely on a new system of meeting within which differences would be resolved, the individual encouraged and protected, and where Friends’ cooperation would enable them to unite to face a hostile world.³⁰⁶

As has been argued by Mack³⁰⁷, Moore,³⁰⁸ Tarter,³⁰⁹ and others, although this unity allowed the Quaker movement to survive, it came at the expense of some of the more unique and ecstatic aspects of the very first period of Quakerism.

2.5.4. Eschatology

A striking difference between contemporary religious belief and belief in 17th-century Europe is that most people then were firmly convinced that the physical return of Christ was possible at anytime, possibly the immediate future, and that each individual needed to actively prepare for it. In England, during the period of time immediately prior to the formation of Quakerism and up to the Restoration in 1660, this apocalyptic outlook was prevalent. Most of the 17th-century sects believed ‘that the second coming of Christ is a future temporal event, and either before it, or after it, there will be a thousand-year period during which the saints will rule,’³¹⁰ and that they were a part of the vanguard of saints participating in the second coming. Many sects followed the view of John Owen, who

³⁰⁶ Mack, *Visionary Women*, 280.

³⁰⁷ Mack, *Visionary Women*, 280.

³⁰⁸ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 227–228.

³⁰⁹ Tarter, ‘Go North!’ 93-94.

³¹⁰ Punshon, *Portrait in Grey*, 32.

‘taught a spiritual doctrine...[that] saw the gathered churches...as harbingers of Christ’s return,’³¹¹ working to create an atmosphere conducive to the second coming.

Other contemporary groups, such as the Fifth Monarchy Men, went even further, actively working to prepare England for Christ’s return to Earth. These groups were political in orientation, believing it was their responsibility to create the circumstances that would make Christ’s return inevitable. Through a specific interpretation of the book of Daniel in the biblical book of Revelation, they believed that the Catholic Church was the fourth beast spoken of in the book of Daniel. Accordingly, defeat of the Catholic Church, through the process of the Reformation, would signal Christ’s second coming.³¹² And, ‘by weird mathematics the date of Christ’s return was calculated to occur at some point in the 1660’s,’³¹³ so preparing for that return was vital. For groups such as this, ‘the political task at hand was to prepare for this advent by putting down worldly governments by force, if persuasion failed to convert them to policies designed to establish the rule of the saints.’³¹⁴ As Hill notes, ‘the Fifth Monarchists, who expected the direct intervention of King Jesus in English politics to bring about the effects which democratic political methods had failed to achieve,’³¹⁵ were hard to distinguish from the Early Quakers for their contemporaries.³¹⁶ This widely held apocalyptical outlook led these groups to use physical means to achieve their spiritual ends, threatening both temporal and spiritual authorities.

Early Quakers were strongly influenced by this apocalyptic viewpoint, believing that they were actively participating in a recreation of the apostolic era.³¹⁷ Because the Early

³¹¹ Punshon, *Portrait in Grey*, 32.

³¹² Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down*, 71–72.

³¹³ Punshon, *Portrait in Grey*, 32–33.

³¹⁴ Punshon, *Portrait in Grey*, 32–33.

³¹⁵ Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down*, 72.

³¹⁶ Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down*, 246.

³¹⁷ Gwyn, *Seekers Found*, 233.

Quakers came from a diversity of backgrounds, they exhibited a difference of opinion regarding how best to show this belief. Many Early Quakers were ardent believers that the overthrow of the monarchy was a sign of the imminent return of Christ.³¹⁸ They, like many others, believed that the victory of the Commonwealth's forces was the first step in the creation of a government comprised of the saints, represented by the various sects that were in control. They believed in public demonstrations of this belief, ones that were confrontational in nature, such as the disruption of church services, public debates with critics, the refusal to swear oaths or remove hats, and the extremes of the Nayler incident.

However, others did not believe in the use of ecstatic, demonstrations that were antagonistic to the general public. Their demonstrations were public, but less antagonistic in nature. These demonstrations included gathering together in communal worship, enduring suffering and persecution for their beliefs, and supporting one another in their spiritual journey. This was rooted in the ideal, expressed by Fox, that:

Christ's Kingdom is not set up by *Carnal Weapons*, for Christ said, *My Kingdom is not of this world*; and therefore his Servants do not fight: Now all you who profess your selves to be Christians and Gospellers, and are fighters with Clubs and Swords about your Religion, you are not Christs Servants, but are contending for Earthly Kingdoms, for Christs Kingdom is fought for with *spiritual Weapons* in patience and sufferings; and Christ said to his Disciples.³¹⁹

For these Early Quakers, theirs was a more passive action, based not on physical actions but on spiritual ones.

The Early Quakers argued that Christ, as represented by the 'inward light,' was a real presence within the individual, and that access to this presence was disrupted by the impediments of the world, including distractions from seeking pleasure, the accumulation of

³¹⁸ Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down*, 243–244.

³¹⁹ Fox, 'XIII. Concerning Christ's Kingdom, How it is set up, and how it is not,' in *Some Principles of the Elect People*, 18.

wealth, and the actions of the Established Churches.³²⁰ Instead of allowing these impediments to deny access to the ‘inward light,’ the Early Quakers sought to find ways to access it in their unique forms of worship.

Because Christ was present within each individual, there was no longer a need to wait for his return; he was already present and accessible to those who sought him inwardly. This belief in a Christ present in the here and now is defined as ‘realized eschatology.’³²¹ This belief was the way ‘by which those disillusioned by the collapse of their apocalyptic vision, spiritualized their political hopes’ to deal with the reality of Christ’s failure to return temporally.³²² The Early Quakers were adjusting to the changed paradigm after the Restoration.

As Spencer outlines:

Quakers believed that the millennial Kingdom of Christ...had come, and they were called to proclaim it, a belief referred to by later historians as a ‘realized eschatology’...This view predominated in the early enthusiastic period, but was modified after the Restoration...A radical apocalyptic millennialism prevailed in the beginnings of Quakerism, similar to that of many Puritan radicals at the time and was modified to a realized eschatology. ‘Christ has come, and is coming and continued as a mystical eschatology, or ‘realizing eschatology’...the Second Coming of Christ, became for early Quakers the real *presence* of Christ in the *present*, the experience of the immediate presence of Christ in them and through them. By means of conversion, the reborn (spiritual person) could live continually in the intimate, continuing presence of God.³²³

Gwyn traces the changing eschatology of the Early Quakers from a temporal eschatology to embrace a more ‘realized eschatology.’³²⁴ He shows that Fox’s preaching was based on the belief of ‘Christ’s return as a presently unfolding reality,’ not something to wait for but rather

³²⁰ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 80-82.

³²¹ Gwyn, *Apocalypse of the Word*, 201–202.

³²² Ernest Gordon Rupp, *Religion in England, 1688–1791* (Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 1986), 146.

³²³ Spencer, ‘Holiness: The Quaker Way to Perfection,’ 154–155; Spencer, *Holiness: The Soul of Quakerism*, 17-18.

³²⁴ Gwyn, *Apocalypse of the Word*, 201–202.

something to be acted on in the here and now.³²⁵ To the Early Quakers, ‘in his first advent, Christ was revealed in a carpenter’s son from Nazareth’ to provide humanity with temporal proof of the Word.³²⁶ Gwyn concludes that, for the Early Quakers, ‘in his second advent, he [Christ] is revealed in a universally bestowed light,’ representing his presence in the spiritual realm.³²⁷

For the Early Quakers, they were both physically and spiritually living in Christ’s presence. The Early Quakers felt the presence of Christ within themselves, viewing it as something integral to their very being. Although the Early Quakers’ mode of access to this presence was passive (i.e., silent worship), they still believed that it was always there, it was just blocked by the distractions of secular life and the impediments of Established Churches. This belief in the real presence of Christ within the individual caused critics to accuse the Early Quakers of claiming that they *were* Christ, a form of blasphemy. Early Quakers, such as Nayler³²⁸ and Fox,³²⁹ publicly defended themselves against these types of charges. The Early Quakers were making a fine distinction between the Light of Christ within the individual and the individual themselves, one difficult to grasp for those on the outside.

The earliest Quakers believed that Christ ‘had come’ to speak through them, that ‘Christ is come to teach his people himself.’³³⁰ For these Early Quakers, theirs was a passive waiting for the ability to discern his presence within. Their meetings for worship were known by outsiders primarily for their ecstatic elements, yet the Early Quakers’ intent was to gather together and passively await the arrival of the Holy Spirit. For them, the experience

³²⁵ Gwyn, *Apocalypse of the Word*, xxii.

³²⁶ Gwyn, *Apocalypse of the Word*, xxii.

³²⁷ Gwyn, *Apocalypse of the Word*, xxii.

³²⁸ Neelon, *James Nayler*, 74-89

³²⁹ Neelon, *James Nayler*, xxx; Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 10-11.

³³⁰ Gwyn, *Apocalypse of the Word*, 30.

was inherently inward (although it did have outward manifestations), one that allowed for unhindered access to the divine presence within.

This passive nature came to mark the Quakers as they moved out of the early period. The silent, contemplative waiting done within the meeting for worship eventually extended outward in their dealings with the rest of society. In their publications, the Early Quakers espoused the need to wait patiently for the changes within society that they sought. Yet whereas their public statements were of a passive nature, the actions of the Early Quakers showed something slightly different.

Regardless of their writings and public statements, the Early Quakers' actions clearly showed that they believed these actions were necessary to allow the individual to find the Truth of their message. The disruption of Anglican services; refusal to pay tithes, swear oaths, or remove hats; the itinerant preaching and traveling abroad for ministry (both participation in and support of); the printing of tracts; and public defense of Quaker theology were all examples ways in which the Early Quakers were actively working to create the world in which they wanted to live. By heeding the Light within, the Early Quakers were actively working to create an environment akin to that of the time of the Apostles. These types of public actions were gradually suppressed, initially by outside forces and then increasingly by internal ones, culminating in the negative reaction held by many Early Quakers to events such as Naylor in Bristol³³¹ or Perrot.³³² This movement to a more passive theology is a significant factor in setting 1678 as an end date for Early Quakerism.

³³¹ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 40-41; Neelon, *James Nayler*, 162-164.

³³² Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down*, 254; Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 194-197.

2.5.5. Suffering

For the first Quakers, suffering was a hallmark of their faith. This suffering can be divided into the ‘spiritual’ and the ‘physical’ or ‘temporal.’ Spiritual suffering often occurred during the individual Quaker’s conversion experience, as described above. Temporal suffering was imposed by the governmental and ecclesiastical authorities, as well as by opponents of Quakerism. These two forms of suffering encountered during the formative years of the Society became a distinctive aspect of the Quaker faith, and it is generally agreed that the ‘Friends lived with persecution from the start.’³³³

2.5.5.1. Spiritual Suffering

The spiritual suffering of the Early Quakers was well documented. As Moore,³³⁴ Spencer,³³⁵ Dandelion,³³⁶ and Gwyn³³⁷ discuss, the Early Quakers were, as a group, marked by feelings of intense spiritual suffering. This is evidenced in the publicly produced tracts expressing spiritual joy at their coming to the Quaker movement³³⁸ and in the private journals of individual Early Quakers not intended for wider publication but to provide a witness to their journey.³³⁹

Beyond the conviction process,³⁴⁰ Early Quakers suffered spiritual discomfort when there were disagreements between members of the Quaker movement. Individually, if an Early Quaker felt that he was not living in the Light, then he would feel cut off from the

³³³ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 155.

³³⁴ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 155-163.

³³⁵ Spencer, ‘Holiness: The Quaker Way to Perfection,’ 157.

³³⁶ Pink Dandelion, *An Introduction to Quakerism* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 38-41.

³³⁷ Gwyn, *Seekers Found*, 249.

³³⁸ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 143.

³³⁹ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 231-232.

³⁴⁰ See: Section 2.5.1.

corporate aspect of worship, which was integral to the Quaker experience.³⁴¹ If an individual's leading was different from that of the rest of the community, then that individual may begin to question the Inward Light.³⁴²

Suffering was also felt when the community became divided over an issue. One such time was when Perrot led a sizable number of Quakers away from the movement over a conflict with Fox, otherwise known as the Perrot incident.³⁴³ Perrot was concerned with the proper behavior during worship, specifically the wearing of hats and shoes.³⁴⁴ In both printed tracts and personal letters, Perrot espoused his beliefs in a freer form of worship than the Early Quaker leadership was willing to tolerate.³⁴⁵ Fox's response was strongly worded, showing his offense at Perrot's questioning of the larger community's decisions on worship and conduct during meetings.³⁴⁶

Fox's 'Gospel Ordering' is also emblematic of communal, spiritual suffering, as its implementation caused significant spiritual suffering by those held to be outside of the 'Gospel Ordering' and therefore outside of the larger community. As Moore³⁴⁷ and Tarter³⁴⁸ show, after epistles were issued from the central leadership outlining proper 'Quaker' behavior, those who disagreed felt a renewal of the spiritual suffering they had experienced in coming to the Quaker movement. Those forced outside of the movement found themselves removed from the spiritual community that they had believed would help them achieve salvation while those still inside felt the pain of losing friends and fellow travelers on their

³⁴¹ Spencer, 'Holiness: The Quaker Way to Perfection,' 156.

³⁴² Spencer, 'Holiness: The Quaker Way to Perfection,' 156.

³⁴³ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 196.

³⁴⁴ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 194-95.

³⁴⁵ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 195.

³⁴⁶ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 195.

³⁴⁷ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 216.

³⁴⁸ Tarter, 'Go North!' 90-93.

spiritual journey.³⁴⁹ Although the Quaker leadership knew their actions caused pain to their fellows, they felt that the suffering was necessary to ensure the survival of the Quaker movement.³⁵⁰

2.5.5.2. Physical Suffering

As Christopher Hill states, ‘In 1603 all English men and women were deemed to be members of the state Church, dissent from which was a punishable offence.’³⁵¹ The Church was tied directly to the state, and Quaker non-acceptance of the Anglican Church—including its forms and practices, its doctrines, its ‘hireling priests,’ and its claim to exclusive control of religious thought—put the Early Quakers in a position antagonistic to the Anglican Church and, by extension, to the monarchy, thereby violating civil law. Thus, Early Quakers could be arrested, arraigned before Judges, tried in court, and placed in prisons where the conditions were deplorable. The first Quakers came aware in an age in which religious dissent was tied directly to political dissent, and was thereby considered threatening to the stability of society as a whole.³⁵² Therefore, those who became Quakers needed to realize that persecution was a very real possibility.

The Quaker movement attracted people from a wide range of different groups, all dissatisfied with society. Former Levellers, Diggers, Puritans, and Anabaptists, as well as individuals with practices similar to the Ranters, gave the Early Quakers air of rabble-rousers. Quakers became the repository for many radical ideas from the diverse people who made up the early society.³⁵³ As Pilgrim states, Early Quakers ‘lived their lives in a way that forced

³⁴⁹ Mack, *Visionary Women*, 283-285.

³⁵⁰ Mack, *Visionary Women*, 295-296

³⁵¹ Christopher Hill, *The Century of Revolution, 1603–1714* (London, UK: Routledge, 2002), 3.

³⁵² Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down*, 245, 250.

³⁵³ Barbour and Roberts, Part C, ‘Introduction,’ in *Early Quaker Writings*, 225–230.

the authorities to take action against them.’³⁵⁴ Even the Civil War era and the subsequent Long Parliament, which first met in 1640 and sat for the next 20 years, were not times of peace for Early Quakers. Although greater tolerance existed during the Commonwealth, the Long Parliament continued to persecute Quakers, and, as early as 1653, early Quaker leaders such as Anthony Pearson were making appeals to Parliament for a lightening of Quaker persecution.³⁵⁵

By the time of the Restoration, ‘There was a general belief that conformity in religion would promote internal peace, and that the country should avoid further experiments in toleration.’³⁵⁶ In the perception of Charles and his followers, the various ‘experiments in toleration’ had led to the Civil War and the regicide that began it. For them, religious pluralism was a major threat to the state, evidenced by the violent and disloyal actions of Parliament’s armies and the plots of the Fifth Monarchy Men, among others.³⁵⁷ In this atmosphere, ‘The Quakers, who were neither violent nor disloyal, suffered...guilt by association,’³⁵⁸ and became victims of efforts to protect the newly restored monarchy from the perceived threats.

The Clarendon Code was one part of the effort to place severe restrictions on the ability of dissident groups to form and exist.³⁵⁹ The Quaker Act of 1662, as the name implies, was aimed directly at stopping the spread of Quakerism, and, when combined with other acts—including the Corporation Act (1661), the Act of Uniformity (1662), the Conventicle Act (1664), and the Five Mile Act (1665) —became a tool the government used

³⁵⁴ Pilgrim, ‘Taming Anarchy,’ 210.

³⁵⁵ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 156.

³⁵⁶ Punshon, *Portrait in Grey*, 81.

³⁵⁷ Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down*, 241–243.

³⁵⁸ Punshon, *Portrait in Grey*, 81.

³⁵⁹ The Clarendon Code was a series of acts adopted by Charles II’s Lord Chancellor, Sir Edward Hyde Clarendon, between 1660 and 1665. Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down*, 194.

repeatedly to persecute and jail dissident Quakers, as well as to deprive Quakers of their property and wealth through ‘ruinous fines.’³⁶⁰ After these acts were passed, ‘at least 5,000 Quakers were imprisoned, at least 500 simultaneously several times,’ and several early Quaker leaders perished because of the deplorable conditions, including Edward Burrough, William Dewsberry, and Francis Howgill, as well as numerous anonymous Quakers.³⁶¹

This political persecution led to an unusual form of belief in the importance of suffering in the religious experience—a ‘theology of suffering.’ Early Quakers viewed suffering as something akin to conversion and a fundamental part of their lives.³⁶² As early as 1655, Quakers began to collect and catalogue their sufferings in an attempt to appeal to public sympathy for a lessening of the crushing persecution of the Quakers and other sects.³⁶³ The recording of these sufferings provided another binding tie for Early Quakers; it was something about which the Early Quakers were well aware when they joined the Society of Friends.³⁶⁴ Moore concludes that ‘Quakers were not expected to seek out suffering, and those who suffered did not receive special honor within the group, but it was known that being a Quaker was likely to lead to a clash with the law, and that the consequences of this must be accepted and not avoided.’³⁶⁵

As Moore discusses, Quakers ‘developed the idea that their suffering was a part of God’s plan, so that Quaker faith and Quaker experience of persecution were found to reinforce each other, instead of being opposed.’³⁶⁶ Early Quakers knew that they were united with Christ, and, as their study of the Scriptures confirmed, Christ himself had suffered.

³⁶⁰ Barbour and Roberts, *Early Quaker Writings*, 38.

³⁶¹ Barbour and Roberts, *Early Quaker Writings*, 38.

³⁶² Spencer, *Holiness: The Soul of Quakerism*, 27-28.

³⁶³ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 157-159.

³⁶⁴ Spencer, ‘Holiness: The Quaker Way to Perfection,’ 158.

³⁶⁵ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 161.

³⁶⁶ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 160.

Indeed, he had stated that ‘the Kingdom of God would not come without a period of great tribulation for the church.’³⁶⁷ Early Quakers saw their own persecution and suffering as a test of faith akin to that which Christ and the early Christians endured, viewing it as a privilege.³⁶⁸ They identified their suffering with that of the Christ on the cross, speaking of the ‘daily cross’ as a burden to be joyfully carried.³⁶⁹ Early Quakers also identified with the early church martyrs who had been killed by the Roman authorities, as well as those martyrs killed in England by Queen Mary and reported in Foxe’s *Book of Martyrs*.³⁷⁰ Some contemporaries accused the Quakers of actively promoting persecution against themselves, hoping to be punished by the authorities.³⁷¹ In reality, persecution was the byproduct of Early Quakers’ conviction in their personally held beliefs, which they would not compromise in the face of authority.

The culmination of the Quaker theology of suffering was the institution of the Meeting for Suffering in 1676. This body was created to help those Early Quakers who suffered persecution to use legal redress in fighting against their persecution. The Meeting for Suffering was one manifestation of a subtle shift in the Quaker view of suffering, as ‘numbers of Friends were coming round to the view that the oppression which they suffered should not be endured passively.’³⁷² Instead of calling down the wrath of God onto the heads of government, Quakers now actively attempted to manipulate the legal system to avoid persecution. Although they could legally fight the persecution that they received from the courts, if they were imprisoned, they had to accept their fate.

³⁶⁷ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 160.

³⁶⁸ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 160.

³⁶⁹ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 161.

³⁷⁰ Foxe’s *Book of Martyrs* prepared by Rev. Ingram Cobbin (London, UK, 1856).[1583]

³⁷¹ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 155–157.

³⁷² Punshon, *Portrait in Grey*, 91.

Yet, the trials that the Early Quakers endured helped to create within them a place that the spirit of the Lord could eventually fill with his love, providing those who had come into the Quaker movement a lessening of their spiritual torment and a joy at having reached a conclusion to their wandering in the wilderness.³⁷³ The ultimate sense of joy and fulfillment that Early Quakers felt, which shines through in all of their writings, would likely not have been so intense if individual Quakers had not suffered the long, painful spiritual and physical path that they had traveled to arrive with a comforting group of like-minded seekers.

2.5.6. Charismatic/Evangelistic

Early Quakers were both charismatic and evangelistic, proclaiming to society at large that they had found the true faith, one that would lead those who embraced it to salvation. As Spencer states ‘Quakers were enthusiasts, they were spirit-filled and spirit-led.’³⁷⁴ This impelled them to proclaim their ecstasy to the entire world,³⁷⁵ following Fox’s declaration:

And now the Everlasting *Gospel* must be *Preached* again to all *Nations, Kindreds, Tongues, and Peoples* which dwell upon the Earth, that through that, Life and Immortality might come to Light in them; And that which hath darkened it from them might be expelled by the same Power [*the Gospel*] which is the Salvation which makes their Souls, Spirits, and Consciences free from that which burthens them; and to them this is glad Tidings.³⁷⁶

The Early Quakers felt their message needed to be heard by all, leading them to openly proclaim their revelation.

Early Quakers were famous (notorious some would say) for following the spirit leading them, sometimes resulting in their disrupting of Anglican services, whereas their own services were enthusiastic, spiritual affairs. Early Quaker meetings for worship were not

³⁷³ Spencer, ‘Holiness: The Quaker Way to Perfection,’ 153.

³⁷⁴ Spencer, ‘Holiness: The Quaker Way to Perfection,’ 153.

³⁷⁵ As discussed later, many individual Quakers felt an intense compulsion to travel throughout England and beyond to give others the opportunity to experience the same spiritual fulfillment. See: Section 2.5.6

³⁷⁶ Fox, ‘VI: Concerning Gospel,’ in *Some Principles of the Elect People* 11-12.

scheduled for specific times or according to the Anglican calendar, instead being convened when the spirit moved those to gather together in worship.³⁷⁷ There existed no liturgy, no time limits, and no specific form to the early congregating of this group of fellow seekers. Instead, during the initial phase, Quaker meetings were completely un-programmed and without structure. Each person had equal access to the 'Inward Light,' and therefore all had equal ability for the Word of God to flow through them. Fox described it thus:

Or *Worship* is in the *Spirit* and in the *Truth*, which the Devil abode not in, but is out of; who is the Author of Strife and Unrighteousness amongst People; which *Truth* makes the Devil to worship and to bow, and also destroys him; and it is the Spirit which mortifies Sin, which makes a separation from God. Now we say, if all *Christendome* had Worshipped God in the Spirit and Truth, they had been in that which the Devil is out of, and had been in the holy Hill, and had felt the Spirit in their own particulars ruling them, and had felt the Spirit of Truth in their own hearts, guiding and teaching of them.³⁷⁸

This encouraged Early Quakers to reject the perceived need, fostered by the Established Church, for a separate clergy,³⁷⁹ because the Word could spring forth at any moment from the most unlikely of voices and places. As a result, the first Quaker meetings for worship were chaotic, spiritual affairs, and very different from those of the Quietist period of the 19th century.³⁸⁰ This chaos was attractive to a population of religious seekers disillusioned with the various spiritual alternatives otherwise available, because it was in the midst of this chaos that the individuals found the freedom to worship as they saw fit.

Early Quakers also experienced an almost fatalistic sense of joy at facing the hardships of life, the same sense that Christ had when he endured that greatest hardship on

³⁷⁷ Pilgrim, 'Taming Anarchy,' 212.

³⁷⁸ Fox, I 'Worship,' in *Principles of the Elect People*, 9.

³⁷⁹ The Established Church taught that the Word could not be properly understood by the Laity, requiring a trained mediator, in the form of the Clergy, who could safely inform the Laity of the correct beliefs. Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 47. This was the argument used against Wycliffe and Hus in their attempts to translate the Bible into their respective vernacular languages. See: Sections 3.2.1 and 3.3.1.

³⁸⁰ See: Pilgrim, *Taming Anarchy*, 212.

the cross.³⁸¹ Although Early Quakers were stern and severe in their behaviors, they believed that this was necessitated by their spiritual connection to God. As Moore explores in her work, this ecstatic feeling permeates much of early Quaker literature, both public and private, specifically the sense of spiritual fulfillment felt by individual Quaker writers.³⁸² Ultimately, it was this sense of spiritual fulfillment that attracted many of the first Quakers to the teachings of George Fox and that later continued to attract a multitude of people who felt spiritual comfort in the Quaker movement.³⁸³

Incidents, such as James Nayler's reenactment of Christ's Passover ride into Jerusalem,³⁸⁴ the rending of clothes in the streets,³⁸⁵ bursting into Anglican Church services,³⁸⁶ even the 'quaking' which gave Quakers their name,³⁸⁷ are examples of the charismatic nature of Early Quakers. As these events show, Early Quakers were willing to use measures considered extreme or blasphemous by the larger society to spread their message.³⁸⁸

The evangelical nature of the Early Quakers reached its pinnacle in the Lamb's War, when George Fox and Margret Fell organized sixty of the early Quaker leaders into groups of two and sent them out into the countryside to preach their message of hope and salvation.³⁸⁹ The goal of the Lamb's War was to introduce to those outside of the Early Quaker movement the beliefs and theological ideas espoused by the Early Quakers. This outreach continued

³⁸¹ Spencer, *Holiness: The Soul of Quakerism*, 28.

³⁸² Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 160.

³⁸³ Gwyn, *Apocalypse of the Word*, 73.

³⁸⁴ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 39-40.

³⁸⁵ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 158.

³⁸⁶ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 158.

³⁸⁷ Fox, Section XIX 'Trembling and Quaking,' in *Some Principles of the Elect People*, 25-26.

³⁸⁸ Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down*, 234-235, 243-244.

³⁸⁹ Dandelion, *An Introduction to Quakerism*, 29.

throughout the first generations of Quakerism through missions to the British colonies,³⁹⁰ Continental Europe, and even the Ottoman Empire.³⁹¹

The participants in the Lamb's War included some of the earliest Quakers, those who were first 'convinced' by George Fox. These men and women went forth with this message, both in England and abroad, and became known to modern Quakers as the 'Valiant Sixty.'³⁹² Starting in the northwest of the England, these early members of the Quaker movement came from the ranks of the Seekers and were tasked with creating and maintaining local meetings where they visited.³⁹³ Many of these Valiant Sixty went on to become leaders of the early Quaker movement in their own right. Notably, some were women, which was highly unusual at the time.³⁹⁴ These Early Quakers had undergone their own conversion experience, and they were filled with the joy of having joined together. As Francis Howgill wrote:

The Kingdom of Heaven did gather us, and catch us all, as in a net, and His heavenly power at one time drew many hundreds to land... the Lord appeared daily to us, to our astonishment, amazement and great admiration, insomuch that we often said to one another, with great joy of heart, 'What? is the Kingdom of God come to be with men? And will He take up His tabernacle among the sons of men, as He did of old? And what? shall we, that were reckoned as the outcasts of Israel have this honor of glory communicated amongst us, which were but men of small parts, and of little abilities in respect of many others...' ³⁹⁵

The use of pairs of preachers was inspired by the Bible, with Fox focusing on Luke 10:1

'After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before

³⁹⁰ The Quaker mission to Barbados is discussed in Larry Dale Gregg, *The Quaker Community on Barbados: Challenging the Culture of the Planter Class* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 2009). The mission to the American Colonies is discussed in Rufus M. Jones, *The Quakers in the American Colonies* (London, UK: MacMillan and Co., 1923).

³⁹¹ For a discussion of Mary Fisher and her trip in 1658, see: Braithwaite, *The Beginnings of Quakerism*, 423.

³⁹² Dandelion, *An Introduction to Quakerism*, 29.

³⁹³ Braithwaite, *The Beginnings of Quakerism*, 95.

³⁹⁴ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 136-137. The role of women will be discussed below in Section 2.5.9.3.

³⁹⁵ Braithwaite, *The Beginnings of Quakerism*, 95.

his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come.³⁹⁶ Drawing from the Early Quaker leadership, various members such as Howgill and Burrough went to London to preach their message in the heart of England.³⁹⁷ Camm and Audland went to Bristol, a major trading and manufacturing center at the time, to preach to the working class.³⁹⁸ Fletcher and Leavens went to Oxford, where the ‘hireling ministers’ and other scholars were trained.³⁹⁹ These and many other Early Quakers chose to forsake the comfort of their homes and families as well as their livelihoods to preach a message of joy to those who would hear them. As Moore notes, these leaders set up meetings in their various locales, and beginning in 1655 were labeled by Fox as ‘Overseer,’ or a person responsible for pastoral care.⁴⁰⁰ This was the start of an organized church which culminated in the Gospel Ordering of the movement.

Although in later periods, Quakerism was not a proselytizing sect that attempted to convert others to their movement, subsequent generations of Quakers maintained some of the Early Quakers’ evangelical aspects through their attempt to define and refine their message to the outside world.⁴⁰¹ Quaker leadership understood that the movement could separate itself from society only to some degree and that they could not (and should not) live completely outside of the rest of society. There would always be points where the Quakers interacted with the rest of society, and, when this occurred, there needed to be a clear understanding of what Quakers did and did not stand for.

The Early Quaker leadership was also compelled by the false accusations hurled at them by their enemies to control how they were perceived by society. Accusations such as

³⁹⁶ Dandelion, *An Introduction to Quakerism*, 29.

³⁹⁷ Dandelion, *An Introduction to Quakerism*, 29.

³⁹⁸ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 147.

³⁹⁹ Mack, *Visionary Women*, 2.

⁴⁰⁰ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 136.

⁴⁰¹ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 135-136.

being secret papists⁴⁰² or seeking the overthrow of the monarchy⁴⁰³ were used by Quaker critics who selectively quoted from Quaker publications in order to discredit the movement. The nature of the Early Quakers interaction with society at large was influenced by their charismatic and evangelistic nature, causing friction that needed to be addressed by a dampening of those aspects of the movement that were causing public ridicule and persecution.

2.5.7. Spirit-Led

Another significant characteristic of Early Quakers is the importance they attached to ensuring that their actions had a spiritual root, whatever else might play a part in their motivation. Failing to remove one's hat before a superior or using the common 'thee' and 'thou' certainly had political and social implications.⁴⁰⁴ Yet, these practices were firmly rooted in a Quaker understanding of God's teaching, specifically the notion that God's will is present in all of our actions, and therefore our actions must align with his teachings.⁴⁰⁵

This insistence on following the inward spirit marked Early Quaker society. It was, in fact, Early Quakers' inability to control their spirit-led actions that caused them to be called 'Quakers,' which was originally a derogatory term used by anti-Quaker factions.⁴⁰⁶ Fox showed how 'through which Power of Christ, the Salvation is wrought out with *Fear* and *Trembling*; and so we can say, *that it is God that worketh in us to will and to do, according to his good Will, and Pleasure.*'⁴⁰⁷ Moore provides a quote from an Early Quaker, describing the spirit leading them to action:

⁴⁰² Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down*, 233.

⁴⁰³ Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down*, 234.

⁴⁰⁴ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 69.

⁴⁰⁵ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 57.

⁴⁰⁶ Mack, *Visionary Women*, 150-153; Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 150.

⁴⁰⁷ Fox, 'XIX: Concerning Trembling and Quaking,' in *Some Principles of the Elect People*, 25-26.

Upon the 10th day of the eighth Month, being on the first day of the week, about the second hour of the day, as I was peaceable and quiet in my own spirit, and also sitting in a quiet and peaceable meeting among my brethren the people of God; the Lord moved his good spirit in me, and his word came unto me, (which was in me as a fire) saying, go to that congregation of people [location given] and declare unto them my word, and bear a testimony for me, and I had no rest nor peace in my own spirit, until I obeyed and went.⁴⁰⁸

For this Early Quaker, the spirit could strike at any moment, and, when it did strike, its effect could be so jarring that he could remember the exact day and time it came. He also relates that the spirit created a fire within him that could not be extinguished until he had completed the leading. It was a common occurrence for Early Quakers to have the inward spirit filling them with an urge to action, with the result that they could not rest until that action was accomplished.⁴⁰⁹ Punshon shows Early Quakers sought to create a community that ‘was under the immediate and continuing guidance of its Lord, whose revelation of himself continuously added to the understanding of the community.’⁴¹⁰

The Quaker practice of the Meeting for Business, during which corporate aspects of the gathered meeting are discussed in a worshipful setting, exemplifies Quaker belief that the spirit can help in all decisions, from applications for marriage to the proper disbursement of funds for the upkeep of the meeting’s grounds to a stance on a particular theological belief.⁴¹¹ For Early Quakers, the spirit moved them to action, and it was the basis for their decision-making process. Moreover, it was a manifestation of ‘the Light of God’ in everyone that helped lead them in their seeking.⁴¹² This reliance on the Spirit for guidance in all aspects of their lives, from the spiritual to the mundane, was a reality, not just an aspiration, and it was one of the distinguishing characteristics of the Early Quaker movement.

⁴⁰⁸ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 124.

⁴⁰⁹ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 124.

⁴¹⁰ Punshon, *Portrait in Grey*, 51.

⁴¹¹ Barbour and Roberts, *Early Quaker Writings*, 30.

⁴¹² Reay, *The Quakers and the English Revolution*, 34.

2.5.8. Mystical

Mysticism—an attempt to find a direct, personal, and immediate connection to God—has been part of Christianity since its inception. As Jones states:

[T]he mystics have in all ages and in all lands—*semper et ubique*—been intent on finding a direct way to God. They have been voices, often crying in the wilderness, announcing the nearness of God, and calling men from the folly of seeking Him where, from the nature of the case, he could not be found.⁴¹³

Early Quakers believed that the presence of God could be felt individually, in the present world. His presence was not confined to the time of the Apostles, as recorded in the Scriptures, but could be discerned by the individual in personal and corporate silent worship.⁴¹⁴ As Benefiel and Phipps state, ‘historians and theologians who study the spirituality of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) frequently locate that religious experience and unique method of silent worship within the mystical stream.’⁴¹⁵ As Spencer shows, ‘when Quakers spoke of having “experiential knowledge of God”...they were speaking of knowing God via the mystical way through direct encounter.’⁴¹⁶ Groups such as Early Quakers, who are considered mystical, profess that the divine presence can be experienced by the individual not just through worship, but directly and at any time and place.⁴¹⁷ Early Quakers ‘considered themselves part of a single tradition, witnessing to the same experience as that of the original disciples, apostles and evangelists of the earliest Christian church,’⁴¹⁸ further reinforcing the Quaker belief in a connection to a primitive form of Christianity.

⁴¹³ Rufus M. Jones, ‘Preface,’ in *Studies in Mystical Religion* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2004), 1.

⁴¹⁴ Margret Benefiel and Rebecca Darden Phipps, ‘Practical Mysticism: Quakers and Social Transformation,’ in *Mysticism and Social Transformation*, ed. Janet Ruffing (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2001), 130.

⁴¹⁵ Benefiel and Darden Phipps, ‘Practical Mysticism,’ 129.

⁴¹⁶ Spencer, ‘Holiness: The Quaker Way to Perfection,’ 158.

⁴¹⁷ Spencer, ‘Holiness: The Quaker Way to Perfection,’ 158.

⁴¹⁸ Spencer, ‘Holiness: The Quaker Way to Perfection,’ 159.

The notion that the Early Quakers were essentially an experiential religion in which one can experience the presence of the divine classified them as ‘mystical’ by Jones, who argued for a relationship between Early Quakers and earlier mystical Christian traditions.⁴¹⁹ Noting that Fox stated ‘and in that *Power of God* the *Cross* is the *Fellowship*, which is a Mystery, which goes through to the beginning, in which stands the Everlasting Glory, and so in that stands the very Mystery itself,’⁴²⁰ Jones placed Early Quakers firmly in the mystical tradition. Benefiel and Darden Phipps expanded on Jones’ hypothesis, showing how mysticism in early Quakerism affected social development within the movement.⁴²¹ As discussed above,⁴²² Spencer in ‘Holiness: The Quaker Way to Perfection’ lists ‘Mysticism’ as one of her eight characteristics of the early Quaker movement.

Early Quakers sought to create a spiritual community, where the presence of the Word was to be felt in everyday life. For Fox, ‘*Christ* is our *Way*, who is the *Light* that doth *enlighten you*, and *every one that cometh into the world*.’⁴²³ The community’s primary concern was providing individuals with the tools and support needed to ensure their salvation.⁴²⁴ Unlike monastic communities, which cloistered their members away from the rest of society, Early Quakers sought to create a community where everyone was working together toward their salvation. As Spencer shows, ‘when early Quakers gathered in silent worship they were expressing an elevated and intense mystical consciousness and were all witnessing to essentially the same “direct knowledge of God”, which they called “union with God” mediated through Christ.’⁴²⁵

⁴¹⁹ Jones, “Introduction,” in *Studies in Mystical Religion*, 3.

⁴²⁰ Jones, “Introduction,” in *Studies in Mystical Religion*, 3.

⁴²¹ Benefiel and Darden Phipps, ‘Practical Mysticism,’ 132.

⁴²² For Spencer’s views, See: Section 2.4.1.

⁴²³ Fox, ‘III: Concerning the Way,’ in *Some Principles of the Elect People*, 10.

⁴²⁴ Benefiel and Darden Phipps, ‘Practical Mysticism,’ 132.

⁴²⁵ Spencer, ‘Holiness: The Quaker Way to Perfection,’ 159.

Early Quakers' adoption of silent worship tapped into a longstanding tradition of mysticism within the Christian church. As Thomas Kimber shows, 'the early Church, for nearly a hundred years after its establishment, recognized the importance of an interval of silent worship in the public assemblies of Christian believers.'⁴²⁶ Throughout Christian history, different individuals and groups used silent meditation and worship to achieve a personal connection with God, finding in the stillness the voice of God.⁴²⁷ As Benefiel and Darden Phipps state, 'the Quaker experience in prayer and silent, expectant worship is characterized by listening to communities from God.'⁴²⁸ These groups viewed the accouterments of the Established Churches as impediments to salvation. Groups, such as the early Church fathers,⁴²⁹ various monastic groups,⁴³⁰ and continental mystics,⁴³¹ have used silent worship as a means to transcend the impediments of the Established Churches and find a personal path to God.⁴³²

For the Early Quakers, mysticism was not just an individual experience but a corporate one as well. As Benefiel and Darden Phipps show:

Douglas Steere describes the particular corporate character of Quaker religious experience as the mystical witness to the active presence of the 'Beyond that is within' He asserts, in fact, that for the Quakers, the outward expression of the mystical apprehension of the presence of God demonstrates 'the living promise of transformation.'⁴³³

⁴²⁶ Thomas Kimber, 'Silent Devotions of the Early Christians,' in *Historical Essays on the Worship of God* (New York, NY: David S. Taber, 1889), 30.

⁴²⁷ Kimber, 'Silent Devotions,' 30.

⁴²⁸ Benefiel and Darden Phipps, 'Practical Mysticism,' 130.

⁴²⁹ Kimber, 'Silent Devotions,' 30.

⁴³⁰ Jones, *Studies in Mystical Religion*, 34.

⁴³¹ Jones, *Studies in Mystical Religion*, 35.

⁴³² Jones, *Studies in Mystical Religion*, 36.

⁴³³ Benefiel and Darden Phipps, 'Practical Mysticism,' 129.

For groups who practice an experiential faith, the presence of God in their lives affects their actions and motivations.⁴³⁴ This was the case with the Early Quakers, whose ‘religious vision and ethical values [arose] from and are [were] formed by Friends’ manner of corporate worship and worshipful living.’⁴³⁵ According to Benefiel and Darden Phipps:

The individual and corporate Quaker experience of the imminent and transcendent presence of God in their lives, communities and the world has led to significant, sustained acts of social conscience that have been characterized as affirmative, ethical, and practical mysticism. Historian Howard H. Brinton claims that Quakers practice a form of ‘group mysticism,’ apprehending religious truth through the immediate illumination of Jesus Christ, the inward teacher.⁴³⁶

The mysticism of the Early Quakers led them to direct action, even if it meant persecution at the hands of the secular or ecclesiastical authorities.⁴³⁷ The immediate presence of Christ compelled them to right action both in their spiritual communities and in society at large.

Early Quakers believed their quest for spiritual ‘Truth’ required listening to the ‘Light of God’ inside one’s own conscience, through which this ‘Truth’ could be revealed.⁴³⁸ In action, this led to the creation of a theology of ‘Immediate Revelation,’ one where the ‘Truth’ could be revealed not only at the conviction of a Quaker, but also throughout his spiritual journey in the quiet stillness of the meeting.⁴³⁹ Early Quakers formulated a doctrine rooted in the continual reevaluation of the theological beliefs of both the individual and the meeting as a whole. Early Quakers came to terms with the corollary implication that the search for the ‘Truth’ could result in changing understanding of just what that Truth meant. As a result, Early Quakers were significantly more flexible and willing to adapt to changes in doctrine and practice than almost any other Christian sect.

⁴³⁴ Benefiel and Darden Phipps, ‘Practical Mysticism,’ 129.

⁴³⁵ Benefiel and Darden Phipps, ‘Practical Mysticism,’ 129.

⁴³⁶ Benefiel and Darden Phipps, ‘Practical Mysticism,’ 129.

⁴³⁷ Tarter, ‘Go North!’, 90-91.

⁴³⁸ Gwyn, *Seekers Found*, 135.

⁴³⁹ Gwyn, *Seekers Found*, 135.

As Gwyn shows, the Early Quakers' view of the 'Truth' was rooted in their understanding of the Gospel of John⁴⁴⁰ and its unique use of that term.⁴⁴¹ Using his 'Four-moments of Truth'⁴⁴² theory, Gwyn examines how John's use of dialectic and questioning of Jesus by others leads to a more dynamic expression of faith than presented in the other three gospels.⁴⁴³ The unique use of the term 'Truth' in the Gospel of John is well documented in other sources, and had a clear effect on the thinking of Early Quakers.⁴⁴⁴ Gwyn differs from Spencer in that, although not denying that there is a place for mysticism in Early Quakerism, he places less emphasis than Spencer on its ultimate effect on Quaker theology.⁴⁴⁵

2.5.9. Leveling

2.5.9.1. Spiritual Leveling

Early Quakers' attempt to do away with the ecclesiastical class exemplifies their belief in a form of spiritual leveling. To Early Quakers, the divisions within the Anglican Church between the clergy and laity were the root cause of many of the problems in English society at large.⁴⁴⁶ The fact that the ability to preach to the masses was reserved for those educated within the ecclesiastical universities was directly contrary to the Early Quakers' interpretation of Scripture. Early Quakers believed it was not only right and proper for all

⁴⁴⁰ The Quaker approach to the Gospel of John is interesting, because this Gospel stands out in contrast with the other three. Ben Barman shows how the structure, language, and specific stories presented in the Gospel of John are unique. Mark Allan Powell deals directly with the definition and use of the word 'Truth,' specifically as it relates to the individual's relationship to Christ. As Powell states, 'John's Gospel calls for its readers to abandon their preconceived notions about life and to entertain an entirely different vision of reality.' In this gospel, Truth is both subjective and objective. Often, once the Truth was discerned within the gospel, or in the everyday life of Early Quakers, it led to beliefs that ran counter to those generally held, such as the debate as to the nature of the visible and invisible church and which was the 'true' church. See: Mark Allen Powell, *The Gospels* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, 1998), 4; Ben Barman, *John the Believable Gospel* (Bristol, UK: Friendly Press, 1994), 16.

⁴⁴¹ Gwyn, *Seekers Found*, 384–396.

⁴⁴² Gwyn, *Seekers Found*, 377–380.

⁴⁴³ Gwyn, *Seekers Found*, 384–386.

⁴⁴⁴ Barman, *John the Believable Gospel*, 15.

⁴⁴⁵ Dandelion, *The Creation of Quaker Theory*, 119.

⁴⁴⁶ Barbour and Roberts, *Early Quaker Writings*, 27.

individuals to proclaim their spirit-led convictions, they felt that the failure to follow their leadings would be a refusal to heed the ‘inner voice’ and a rejection of the will of God.⁴⁴⁷ To Early Quakers, free preaching by the individual to the larger collective was the essence of personal and corporate salvation. The insistence that preaching should be reserved solely for the clergy was thus an impediment to Early Quakers’ ability to practice as they saw necessary for their salvation. Barclay outlines this need in the Tenth Proposition of his *Apology*, as follows:

As by this gift or Light of God all true knowledge in things spiritual is received and revealed, so by the same, as it is manifested and received in the heart by the strength and power thereof, every true minister of the Gospel is ordained, prepared and supplied in the work of the ministry; and by the leading, moving, and drawing hereof ought every evangelist and Christian pastor to be led and ordered in his labor and work of the Gospel, both as to the place where, as to the persons to whom, and as to the times when he is to minister. Moreover, those who have this authority may and ought to preach the Gospel, though without human commission or literature; as on the other hand, those who want the authority of this divine gift, however learned or authorized by the commissions of men and churches, are to be esteemed but as deceivers and not true ministers of the Gospel.⁴⁴⁸

Barclay (like many other Early Quakers and member of other sects), thus spoke out against those who made the ministry a profession, in which one needed to be trained. Early Quakers viewed the opportunity for each individual to minister to the larger collective as a gift from God, something to be encouraged, not stifled.⁴⁴⁹ To promote the exercise of this gift, the Early Quakers had to level the spiritual playing field to espouse an equality of all ideas emanating from those who were spirit-led.

⁴⁴⁷ Barbour and Roberts, *Early Quaker Writings*, 27.

⁴⁴⁸ Barclay, *An Apology for the True Christian Divinity*, 230.

⁴⁴⁹ Mack, *Visionary Women*, 273–275.

Many reformation groups at this time held to a belief in predestination,⁴⁵⁰ which the Early Quakers firmly rejected. Predestination, like the Established Church doctrine, removed any personal responsibility for one's salvation. As Ferguson states, the Early Quakers 'believed that all persons had within themselves two seeds: one of God, the other of Satan, but each individual had freedom to choose which of the two would have precedence.'⁴⁵¹ Although for the Early Quakers this freedom came with a price, namely spiritual suffering, it meant that each individual could achieve salvation. As Gwyn shows, 'early Friends preached that *only one seed is elect*: all must surrender to Christ's resurrection within,' hoping to inform individuals that they had the power to control their own salvation.⁴⁵² For the Early Quakers, predestination was not mentioned in the Bible and was seen as limiting the ability for Christ's message to be spread; therefore, it was to be rejected.

2.5.9.2. Social Leveling

Early Quakers promoted the idea of social leveling, which they believed was necessary to create a social reality suited to the return of Christ to earth.⁴⁵³ This social leveling had the goal of redressing those ills that led to the imbalances in society that perpetuated the divisions of the classes.⁴⁵⁴ These leveling beliefs tied the Early Quakers to groups, such as the Diggers⁴⁵⁵ and the Fifth Monarchy Men,⁴⁵⁶ who sought to use the chaos of the Civil War years and the Restoration to promote their social agendas. However, unlike

⁴⁵⁰ Predestination is the belief that only a predetermined elect few will be saved, whereas the bulk of humanity is condemned to hell. Estep, *Renaissance and Reformation*, 188, 214, 229-231.

⁴⁵¹ Ferguson, *Politics Quaker Style*, 111.

⁴⁵² Douglas Gwyn, 'The Early Quaker Lamb's War: Secularization and the Death of Tragedy in Early Modern England' in *Towards Tragedy/Reclaiming Hope: Literature, Theology and Sociology in Conversation* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2003), 41.

⁴⁵³ Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down*, 240-241.

⁴⁵⁴ Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down*, 112.

⁴⁵⁵ Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down*, 112-113.

⁴⁵⁶ Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down*, 246.

the Fifth Monarchy Men, Early Quakers did not actively work against the government or those institutions with which they disagreed. Instead, Early Quakers supported those groups and institutions with which they philosophically agreed.⁴⁵⁷ Thus, although not engaging in direct action against those forces oppressing them, Early Quakers came into conflict with the social and political establishment by their support for institutions opposed to that establishment.

Early Quakers also rejected those social conventions that they viewed as impediments to their gathering together for their salvation. Early Quakers refused to swear oaths, which led to their persecution by the authorities.⁴⁵⁸ They also refused to remove their hats in the presence of those ‘socially superior,’ viewing the social hierarchy to be a creation of man, not God, and an impediment to salvation.⁴⁵⁹

2.5.9.3. The Early Quaker View on Women

The Early Quaker view on women was radically different from traditional English society. Women held a status in the Quaker movement equal to that of men, and ‘there was complete equality as regards the ministry, at least in theory, between men and women.’⁴⁶⁰ Although some male Quaker leaders held onto their inherited English prejudices against woman, Quaker theology led most Quakers to believe that women had equal access to the Light within, and therefore had the same rights within the spiritual community.⁴⁶¹ To Gwyn, this was ‘Probably based in their own readings of the Bible.’ Early Quakers could find ‘many references to prophetesses in the Bible,’ and, by stating that ‘the Spirit must not be quenched where it is poured upon the daughter,’ George Fox plainly saw no distinction

⁴⁵⁷ Punshon, *Portrait in Grey*, 29.

⁴⁵⁸ See: Section 2.5.5

⁴⁵⁹ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 119–120.

⁴⁶⁰ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 125.

⁴⁶¹ Gwyn, *Seekers Found*, 356.

between genders in terms of ability of each to discern the 'inward light' and act on their discernment.⁴⁶² Moore states that:

[T]here was complete equality as regards the ministry, at least in theory, between men and women, and there are no early records of men being preferred to women...there was no clear difference, as between men and women, in the experience of being called to ministry.⁴⁶³

This belief in the equality of the sexes led Early Quakers to promote an individual woman's ability to follow her own leadings. This eventually gave rise to traveling women missionaries, active women preachers, and the creation of a separate Women's Meeting, which developed into a forum that empowered women to actively pursue their own spiritual leadings.⁴⁶⁴ Works were produced in defense of women's preaching, such as that by Margaret Fell, from 1666 or 1667, to which she gave a title with a clear meaning, *Women's Speaking: Justified, Proved, and Allowed of by the Scriptures, All such as speak by the Spirit and Power of the Lord Jesus. And how Women were the first that Preached the Tidings of the Resurrection of Jesus, and were sent by Christ's own Command, before he Ascended to the Father, John 20. 17.*⁴⁶⁵ Fell concluded:

And first, when *God created Man in his own Image, in the Image of God created he them, Male and Female; and God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply: And God said, Behold, I have given you of every Herb, &c. Gen. 1.* Here God joyns them together in his own Image, and makes no such Distinctions and Differences as Men do; for though they be weak, he is strong; and as he said to the Apostle, *His Grace is sufficient, and his Strength is made manifest in Weakness*, 2 Cor. 12. 9. And such hath the Lord chosen, even *the weak things of the World, to confound the things which are mighty; and things which are despised, hath God chosen, to bring to nought things that are*, 1 Cor. 1. And God hath put no such difference between the Male and Female, as Men would make.⁴⁶⁶

⁴⁶² Gwyn, *Seekers Found*, 354.

⁴⁶³ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 125.

⁴⁶⁴ Tarter, 'Go North!' 87.

⁴⁶⁵ Fell, *Women's Speaking*, 1.

⁴⁶⁶ Fell, *Women's Speaking*, 1.

This work, like other Early Quaker works, was infused with scriptural evidence, although evidence used in a way inconsistent with the Established Churches and many other sects.

The role of women within Quakerism changed over time. As authors, such as Mack,⁴⁶⁷ Trevett,⁴⁶⁸ and Tarter,⁴⁶⁹ show, from the inception of the Quaker movement, Quaker women played an important role. Yet, because this role went against societal norms, there existed a tension between some, mainly male, leaders as to the proper role women should play.⁴⁷⁰ As their works show, ‘not only was the prominence of Quaker women both disturbing and amusing to those outside the movement,’⁴⁷¹ it was something that internally caused division.

Although some women, such as Margaret Fell and Mary Penington, were held in high regard and clearly had the respect of those inside and outside of the movement, other women, such as Martha Simmonds and ‘even an upright woman like Elizabeth Hooton were perceived as more disorderly—and frequently more ludicrous—than... her male counterparts,’⁴⁷² particularly to those outside of the movement. Events such as the Naylor incident led Early Quakers to respond ‘with an internal wave of discipline and a tight rein on displays of enthusiasm, primarily aimed at the women who had most commonly manifested such corporeal prophecy in Meetings.’⁴⁷³ As Quakerism moved from a sect to a church, the leadership felt it necessary to change the role of women within the movement, but had to do it in a way that ensured women could continue to be an active part of the spiritual community without causing significant public scorn.

⁴⁶⁷ Mack, *Visionary Women*, 127-305.

⁴⁶⁸ Trevett, *Women and Quakerism in the Seventeenth Century*.

⁴⁶⁹ Tarter, ‘Go North!’ 88-92 and Tarter, ‘Quaking in the Light’, 149-152.

⁴⁷⁰ Mack, *Visionary Women*, 277-279.

⁴⁷¹ Mack, *Visionary Women*, 277.

⁴⁷² Mack, *Visionary Women*, 276.

⁴⁷³ Tarter, ‘Go North!’ 90.

Another issue was the Quaker use of female imagery by male Quakers. As discussed by Moore⁴⁷⁴ and Mack,⁴⁷⁵ the fact that ‘those on the antinomian fringe of Quakerism had invariably expressed their denial of outward forms and categories by means of feminine imagery,’⁴⁷⁶ caused great embarrassment to those on the more mainstream side of the movement. Mack shows how ‘in a...public epistle, Perrot addressed Friends as though his spiritual self had actually been reborn as female: “In this kingdom of the tribulation I am one of you dear *sisters*...salvation reacheth me and I the *damsel* am refreshed, dear *sisters*.”’ He signed still another letter, “I am you sister in our Spouse.”’⁴⁷⁷ This use of feminine imagery in language eventually was censored out of public tracts, one of the first aspects of Fox’s Gospel Ordering.⁴⁷⁸

Yet where Tarter⁴⁷⁹ sees the increasing controls as specifically attacking and marginalizing women within the movement, Mack argues that:

Clearly, the transition from sect to church did not involve anything so simple, or so dismal, as the death of female freedom and the birth of oppression. Rather, it changed the setting of women’s spiritual creativity from the home and the street to the women’s meeting, and, in so doing, it introduced a political dimension into the discussion of the proper vocation of female friends.⁴⁸⁰

Regardless of the change in the role of women, the fact remains that they continued to be a vital part of the movement, in defiance of social norms.

Early Quakers’ belief in spiritual and social equality was directly tied to ‘their teaching of the coming Kingdom of the Lord,’⁴⁸¹ because the second coming would create a perfect society of the elect post-Revelation, one based on equality and love. To Gwyn, this

⁴⁷⁴ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 57.

⁴⁷⁵ Mack, *Visionary Women*, 277–278.

⁴⁷⁶ Mack, *Visionary Women*, 277.

⁴⁷⁷ Mack, *Visionary Women*, 277.

⁴⁷⁸ Tarter, ‘Go North!’ 91.

⁴⁷⁹ Tarter, ‘Go North!’ 90–93.

⁴⁸⁰ Mack, *Visionary Women*, 276.

⁴⁸¹ Gwyn, *Seekers Found*, 200–202.

complete inclusion of women was ‘probably the most profound [example of] social re-ordering within early Quakerism.’⁴⁸² Although this view placed Quakers at odds with much of British society, it was an outgrowth of the Quaker belief that everyone had a measure of the Light of God inside of them that could allow them to become convinced of their sin.⁴⁸³ Even as the role of women changed over time, it was one of the most radical of the defining characteristics of Early Quakers, considered a heretical idea by the Anglican, Catholic, and many Protestant churches.⁴⁸⁴ The role of women, along with the broader ideals of social and spiritual leveling, was one the characteristics of Early Quakerism that changed significantly from the first to subsequent generations, and is instructive in helping to define the differences between the two.

2.5.10. The Bible

The Early Quaker view of Scripture is another important defining characteristic. Both Spencer and Moore agree that the Early Quakers viewed the Bible in both traditional and unique ways.⁴⁸⁵ Quakers, like much of English society, viewed the Bible as an essential part of life, providing imagery and metaphor as well as an authority derived from its divine origin.⁴⁸⁶ However, this belief in authority was colored by the unique Quaker view of ‘Immediate Revelation,’ which gave the Early Quakers a sense that each individual was entitled to interpret the Scriptures. This, in turn, drove them to split from the Anglican

⁴⁸² Gwyn, *Apocalypse of the Word*, 35.

⁴⁸³ Reay, *The Quakers and the English Revolution*, 26.

⁴⁸⁴ Gwyn, *Apocalypse of the Word*, 35.

⁴⁸⁵ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 51–59; Spencer, ‘Holiness: The Quaker Way to Perfection,’ 154; Spencer, *Holiness: The Soul of Quakerism*, 15–17.

⁴⁸⁶ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 51.

Church and other sects, such as the Puritans, who believed in a strictly literal interpretation of the Bible and its authority.⁴⁸⁷

In 17th-century English society, the Bible and its imagery dominated everyday life. As Moore points out, ‘in the mid-seventeenth century, the Bible was built into the framework of everyday life, and apart from extreme radicals few people questioned its literal truth and its importance as a guide.’⁴⁸⁸ Early Quakers’ use of the Bible was as much a product of their personal understanding of Scripture as it was an outgrowth of contemporary English society, and it was not unique to Quakers (although their view of the Bible’s place in one’s life was unique).⁴⁸⁹ In England, as in the rest of Europe, the Bible was the most important book in everyday life. It permeated society, from readings at Sunday mass to the use of biblical passages in literary works, such as those of Shakespeare, and the Bible provided a common point of understanding in both language and imagery in 17th-century England.⁴⁹⁰ As Punshon discusses, ‘the early Friends lived in an atmosphere charged with symbolism and figurative speech’ that was directly related to the Bible.⁴⁹¹ All Englishmen, including Early Quakers, would have easily identified with biblical ideas and phrases, which led to the Quakers using biblical passages for the purpose of readily translating Quaker ideas into a language that all of English society could understand.⁴⁹²

For Early Quakers, the Bible held a special place, as it did for the rest of English society. However, the Quaker view of the importance and place of the Bible differed greatly from the rest of British society. Fox argued that:

⁴⁸⁷ Gwyn, *Apocalypse of the Word*, 30–31.

⁴⁸⁸ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 51.

⁴⁸⁹ Spencer, ‘Holiness: The Quaker Way to Perfection,’ 154; Spencer, *Holiness: The Soul of Quakerism*, 15–17.

⁴⁹⁰ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 51.

⁴⁹¹ Punshon, *Portrait in Grey*, 50.

⁴⁹² Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 56.

[T]he Scriptures we say were not given forth for men to make a trade of, and to keep People alwayes learning, that they may be alwayes reaching to get money of them; this is by the earthly Wisdom, Knowledge and Understanding, which must perish and be confounded and come to nought, and is not in the Wisdom which comes from above, (which is pure and peaceable) but in the Wisdom which is below.⁴⁹³

For most sects in the 17th century, the Bible was the unerring word of God, something to be followed to the letter. By contrast, the Quakers' belief in 'Immediate Revelation' and their belief in an internal guiding Light resulted in a different perception of the Bible.⁴⁹⁴ Fox stated:

But this is the state and right use of the Scriptures, For all People to believe them, and to read them, and to walk in the *Light*, and to feel the Power and Spirit which was in them that gave them forth, by which they may know them and have them revealed to them, and so feel Christ which is the top and corner Stone, which doth fulfil them; and so to receive and live in him that doth fulfil them, who is the end of the *Prophets*, and all *Types, Figures* and *Shadows*... So the *Scriptures of Truth*, I say, were given forth to be believed, read, fulfilled and practiced, and the things enjoyed they speak of, that is, Christ Jesus the substance... The *Scriptures of Truth*, are the Words of God, which were learnt of God the Father of Truth, and they cannot be broken, but must be fulfilled; and he that doth fulfil, is Christ, by whom all things were made and created, who is called *The Word of God*.⁴⁹⁵

Vann states that 'to the Puritans, the Bible was the inerrant [sic] Word of God; to the Quakers, [the Bible was] a record (more or less corrupted by the errors of copyists and binders) of what the Spirit of God had told earlier writers and would say again.'⁴⁹⁶ The Bible was thus a great source of inspiration and imagery, but not the direct Word of God. Early Quakers recognized that the way in which the Bible was being used by the Anglican Church and most of the other sects of the 17th century resulted in a spiritual dead-end, one that was based on following only the *letter* of the Bible to the exclusion of the *spirit*, which inspired its

⁴⁹³ Fox, 'X: Concerning Scripture,' in *Some Principles of the Elect People*, 15-16.

⁴⁹⁴ Gwyn, *Apocalypse of the Word*, 31.

⁴⁹⁵ Fox, 'X: Concerning Scripture,' in *Some Principles of the Elect People*, 15-16.

⁴⁹⁶ Vann, *Social Development*, 32.

writing and which extended beyond the written words.⁴⁹⁷ This conclusion, reached by many Early Quakers during their spiritual journeys before coming to the Society, contributed to the sense of disillusionment that they carried with them.⁴⁹⁸

2.5.11. Primitive Christianity Restored

The Early Quakers believed they were inheritors of the tenets and practices of the primitive Christian church. As discussed above, they related their own conversion experiences and the development of a new (or, as they believed, rediscovered) system of practices to the first apostles of Christ and the primitive days of the Christian faith.⁴⁹⁹

Early Quakers believed that they had in them the same spirit of God that had inspired the early apostles, and that accordingly, they were the inheritors of the spiritual flame that burned in Christ's first followers. Fox stated:

*The Cross of Christ is the Power of God, which crosses the World; which Cross of Christ (the Power of God) was among the Apostles, which Crucified them from outward things, Figures, Types, Shadows, and Inventions of men: So those that have gone from the Power of God since the Apostles dayes, have set up many other Crosses, who have lost the true Cross, which is the Power of God: For I say the Cross of Christ, which is the Power of God, Crucifies the state which Adam and Eve, and all their Children were in the Fall; in which Cross is the Power; by which Cross they come to the state in which they were before their Fall; and in that Power of God the Cross is the Fellowship, which is a Mystery, which goes through to the beginning, in which stands the Everlasting Glory, and so in that stands the very Mystery itself.*⁵⁰⁰

Early Quakers 'considered themselves part of a single tradition, witnessing to the same experience as that of the original disciples, apostles and evangelists of the earliest Christian

⁴⁹⁷ Gwyn, *Apocalypse of the Word*, 31.

⁴⁹⁸ Punshon, *Portrait in Grey*, 39.

⁴⁹⁹ See: Sections 2.5.1, 2.5.6 and 2.5.8.

⁵⁰⁰ Fox, Section IV 'Concerning the Cross,' in *Some Principles of the Elect People*, 10-11.

church,' further reinforcing the Quaker belief in a connection to a primitive form of Christianity.⁵⁰¹ For Fox:

There is *one Faith*, which purifies the heart; which gives the Victory, which brings to have access to God, which gives the Victory over that which separates from God; in which *Faith* was the Unity of the Saints in the Primitive Times, in which stands ours, which *Faith* is the Gift of God.⁵⁰²

He also believed that:

The *True Fellowship* it is in the Gospel which is amongst us; which was amongst the Apostles, in the Spirit and in the *Light*; through which we have *Fellowship* with the *Father* and with the *Son*.⁵⁰³

It was this spirit that moved Early Quakers to disrupt sermons by 'hireling priests,'⁵⁰⁴ to refuse to swear oaths,⁵⁰⁵ to refuse to pay tithes,⁵⁰⁶ and to walk through the streets declaring the coming of the kingdom of Christ to the world.⁵⁰⁷ Using descriptions of the early form of the Christian church found in the Scriptures, Early Quakers structured their society upon their interpretation of the manner in which Christ and his apostles practiced their faith.⁵⁰⁸ Early Quakers 'insisted that religion should be concerned with conduct and spiritual experience rather than with refinement of points of doctrine.'⁵⁰⁹ These interpretations led them to reject the sacraments, a paid clergy, the paying of tithes, and the doctrinal dictates of the Established Churches.

⁵⁰¹ Spencer, 'Holiness: The Quaker Way to Perfection,' 159.

⁵⁰² Fox, Section VII, 'Concerning Faith,' in *Some Principles of the Elect People*, 12.

⁵⁰³ Fox, Section V 'On Fellowship,' in *Some Principles of the Elect People*, 11.

⁵⁰⁴ Punshon, *Portrait in Grey*, 64–65.

⁵⁰⁵ 'And further, Christ is the end of all *Oathes* which were in the Law, and which were before the Law, the *Oathes* that ended the strife among Men.' Fox, 'XII: Concerning the Higher Power,' in *Some Principles of the Elect People*.

⁵⁰⁶ Fox, Section XI, 'Tithes,' in *Some Principles of the Elect People*, 16–17.

⁵⁰⁷ Tarter, 'Go North!' 154–155.

⁵⁰⁸ Spencer, 'Holiness: The Quaker Way to Perfection,' 159.

⁵⁰⁹ Punshon, *Portrait in Grey*, 95.

Aldman's *False Prophets and False Teachers* 'may have been the earliest Quaker writing to appear in print,'⁵¹⁰ and outlines the Early Quaker objections to the Anglican mode of worship and control.⁵¹¹ Aldman focuses on the nature of Quaker (unpaid) ministry, as well as 'Friends condemnation of the parish churches and the compulsory tithes by which they were supported.'⁵¹² These sentiments are echoed by Barclay in his *Apology*, Fox in *Great Mystery of the Great Whore Unfolded* (1659) and in *Some Principles*, and in the debates between Nayler and Baxter.⁵¹³ These authors, and Early Quakers as a whole, rejected the Established Church's hierarchy, because there was no scriptural evidence for it. They viewed the Established Church's rules and regulations as having been created by man to serve his own needs.⁵¹⁴

Ultimately, Early Quakers came to consider the contemporary incarnations of the church to be in apostasy. Therefore, these churches were inherently 'false' and taught false doctrines and beliefs that led their members further and further from the Light of God,⁵¹⁵ whereas the Quakers were the true church,⁵¹⁶ spiritually connected through the Holy Spirit to the Apostolic Church. Penn outlined these Quaker beliefs in *Primitive Christianity Revived*. As Punshon states, Penn:

[sought] to show that Quakerism is perfectly orthodox and in keeping with the teaching of the New Testament, but that its peculiar testimonies are really the nucleus of Christianity, round which the elements of defective mainstream orthodoxy ought to revolve.⁵¹⁷

⁵¹⁰ Barbour and Roberts, *Early Quaker Writings*, 358.

⁵¹¹ Barbour and Roberts, *Early Quaker Writings*, 359.

⁵¹² Barbour and Roberts, *Early Quaker Writings*, 359.

⁵¹³ Barbour and Roberts, *Early Quaker Writings*, 277.

⁵¹⁴ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 63.

⁵¹⁵ Gwyn, *Seekers Found*, 134.

⁵¹⁶ Similar to the positions stated by both Wycliffe and Hus, see: Sections 3.2.1, 3.2.4, 3.3.1 and 3.3.4.

⁵¹⁷ Punshon, *Portrait in Grey*, 95.

Early Quakers believed they had tapped into a stream of Christianity that was, in fact, more orthodox than that espoused by the Established Church of the 17th century.⁵¹⁸ Gwyn expands on this idea, stating that ‘the Early Friends understood themselves as nothing less than the restorers of the apostolic life, message, and Church order.’⁵¹⁹ Punshon shows that:

To those who accepted Truth...Life in the restored Church was different from what people had experienced previously, for those who had come into the light received ‘the same power and spirit that the Apostles were in.’ This was another claim made by George Fox for himself and the community that fathered round him. What it meant was that the restored Church was identical to that which had received the Holy Spirit and written the New Testament all those years before. It was under the immediate and continuing guidance of its Lord, whose revelation of himself continuously added to the understanding of the community.⁵²⁰

The Quaker desire to emulate the Apostolic Era caused them to directly confront the Anglican authorities in their churches, debating with them on the merits of their beliefs. As Gwyn points out, ‘Fox was keenly aware of the first-century synagogue dynamic evoked by Quaker confrontations in the steeplehouses,’⁵²¹ and what Jesus did in the temple. This dynamic was yet another connection between Early Quakers and the primitive church, something that Early Quakers actively promoted.

Early Quakers believed they were acting under the same direction (the Holy Spirit) as that which led the Apostles. To Gwyn, Early Quakers sought a ‘Church gathered by a direct revelation of God’s Word, unmediated by either scripture or the tradition of Church teaching.’⁵²² This belief helped Early Quakers to define themselves as a movement, bringing them closer to the apostolic experience.

⁵¹⁸ Gwyn, *Apocalypse of the Word*, 42.

⁵¹⁹ Gwyn, *Apocalypse of the Word*, 212.

⁵²⁰ Punshon, *Portrait in Grey*, 51.

⁵²¹ Gwyn, *Apocalypse of the Word*, 42.

⁵²² Gwyn, *Apocalypse of the Word*, 213.

2.6. Chapter Summary

This chapter explored the Early Quaker movement, specifically the theological beliefs and the actions those beliefs engendered. Through the use of various primary and secondary sources, the period of Early Quakers was defined as ending in 1678.⁵²³ This definition was based on the increasing authority exerted by the Quaker leadership through Fox's Gospel Ordering, which was fully formed by 1678. Using Fox's *Some Principles*, Nayler's *Love to the Lost*, Burrough's *Declaration of Faith*, and Barclay's *Apology*, this chapter sets the parameters for the defining characteristics of Early Quakerism.⁵²⁴ The chapter then examined the work of Moore and Spencer in defining the characteristics of Early Quakerism, leading to the listing of the eleven characteristics that this dissertation asserts define Early Quakers.⁵²⁵ Through an in-depth discussion of each of the eleven characteristics, the chapter provided a detailed picture of early Quakerism, including its theology, practice, and social customs.⁵²⁶ The eleven characteristics laid out above are central to an understanding of the Early Quaker movement's correspondence to Wycliffe and Hus, which is discussed in Chapter 4.

⁵²³ See: Section 2.2.

⁵²⁴ See: Sections 2.2 and 2.3.

⁵²⁵ See: Sections: 2.4.1. Spencer; Section 2.4.2. Moore; Section 2.4.3. Comparison; Section 2.4.4. This Author's View.

⁵²⁶ See: Sections 2.5.1 to 2.5.11.

Chapter Three: Wycliffe and Hus

3.1. Introduction

This chapter examines the teachings of John Wycliffe and John Hus and lays the foundation for the discussion of their correspondence with Early Quakers in Chapter 4. Section 3.2 discusses Wycliffe and his followers, and Section 3.3 discusses Hus and his followers. Each of these sections is divided into five subsections: Introduction, History, Major Works, Theology, Practice, and Politics, with a summary at the end of each section. Each section contains a detailed analysis of each group, including its creation, how its ideas were disseminated, the beliefs espoused by each sect, and the manner in which their beliefs were put into practice.

Section 3.4 examines the scholarly work regarding the connection between Wycliffe and Hus. Section 3.4.1 considers the historical background of this connection, whereas Section 3.4.2 discusses the specific differences between theological and social views of Wycliffe and Hus. Section 3.5 explores the differing theories into the exact nature of the connection between Wycliffe and the Lollards, on the one hand, and Hus and the Hussites, on the other, specifically looking at current Hussite scholarship (3.5.1) and comparative heretical studies (3.5.2), and concluding with this author's views on the nature of the connection (3.5.3).

Section 3.6 examines Wycliffe and Hus in Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*, outlining the work, its importance in England after its printing, and the use of Wycliffe and Hus by Foxe as exemplars to the Protestant cause. Section 3.7 details the Early Quaker use of Wycliffe and Hus, stemming from the understanding they gained from the *Book of Martyrs*. This section

examines the issues for which the Early Quakers turned to Wycliffe and Hus for legitimacy and support for their beliefs.

Section 3.8 summarizes this chapter, highlighting the issues presented in Chapter 4 to confirm the existence of the correspondence between the QWH.

3.2. John Wycliffe

3.2.1. Introduction

In the 1370s, a heretical sect known as the Lollards or Wycliffites gained great popularity in England.¹ This group was founded on the theological principles of John Wycliffe. The Lollards remained active, with continuing influence in English spiritual thought, through the end of the 14th century, even after Wycliffe's disavowal of the sect and his banishment from Oxford in 1384.² Although scholars have debated the extent of the Lollards' influence in England after Wycliffe's posthumous excommunication at the Council of Constance in 1415,³ there is documentary evidence of Lollard executions in England throughout the middle of the 15th century.⁴ Also, 'in regard to the "heresy" which was discerned in England,' there existed a link through 'the teaching of John Wycliffe,' between Lollardism and 'the subsequent [Hussite heresy] in Bohemia (*post hoc* or *propter hoc* remaining the issue of contention).'⁵ Although the long-term effect of Wycliffe and

¹ The followers of Wycliffe who came from outside of academia were labeled by their detractors as 'Lollards,' a derogatory term meant to poke fun at their under-the-breath praying. These followers carried on the movement after Wycliffe abandoned it in 1382. Although their contemporary detractors and early historians characterized the movement as being split into academic 'Wycliffites' and nonacademic 'Lollards,' modern scholars tend to agree that the two groups were melded into one, with little made by the movement itself of the distinction between those in the academic and nonacademic spheres. This dissertation treats the two groups as one and the same. See: Fiona Somerset, 'Introduction,' in *Lollards and their Influence* eds. Fiona Somerset, Jill C. Havens, and Derrick G. Pitard (Rochester, NY: Boydell & Brewer, 2003), 9.

² Hudson, Anne. 'Preface,' in *Lollards and Their Influence*, edited by Fiona Somerset, Jill C. Havens, and Derrick G. Pitard. (Rochester, NY: Boydell & Brewer Inc., 2003), 2.

³ Somerset, *Lollards and Their Influence*, 13-15.

⁴ Vaughan, *The Life and Opinions of John de Wycliffe*, 35.

⁵ Hudson, 'Preface,' in *Lollards and Their Influence*, 3.

Lollardism continues to be debated, it undoubtedly affected English society throughout the era of the Civil War and the Restoration, specifically in the fields of theology and literature.⁶ Unlike the ideas of earlier reform-minded academics, Wycliffe's teaching penetrated beyond the walls of the ecclesiastical colleges and into the world of the common people.⁷

3.2.2. Roots and History of Wycliffe's Beliefs

In the late 14th and early 15th centuries, the Catholic world experienced an identity crisis. Rival popes were installed in Rome and Avignon, both claiming to have absolute authority over the entire Catholic world.⁸ The Great Schism, as it would be termed, was the catalyst for much of the heretical groups and Protestant reformation that followed.⁹ The idea that two different men could claim the power and authority of Pope, backed only by rival secular powers and not by God, caused many people, both common and educated, to conclude that the Catholic Church no longer offered the path to salvation.¹⁰

In England, the effects of the Great Schism were combined with a longstanding, uniquely English antipapal sentiment. To many Englishman, the Pope and the Church hierarchy did not derive their power from the will of the English people, instead using the secular force of the Norman invaders and their descendants to enforce papal authority over an oppressed indigenous population.¹¹ The attacks of Wycliffe and the Lollards on ecclesiastical wealth, their publication of a vernacular Bible, their belief that the King of England should head the Anglican Church and their attempts at a radical reform of the Church all tapped into

⁶ For the most current work in Lollardism, see: *Lollards and Their Influence*, eds. Fiona Somerset, Jill C. Havens, and Derrick G. Pitard.

⁷ Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 220-221.

⁸ Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 210.

⁹ Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 210.

¹⁰ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 81 and Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 210.

¹¹ This extreme anti-Catholicism remained a strong influence on English religion and society and lasted throughout the Civil War period—as evidenced by various civil war sects being charged as Catholic agents—and even into the modern age. Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down*, 233-238.

this preexisting English disenchantment with an externally imposed papal hierarchy.¹² The English concept of the ‘alien nature’ of papal authority helped set the stage for Wycliffe’s heresy and its English national flavor.¹³

Prior to Wycliffe, other English religious figures were active in expressing their opposition to papal authority. One important voice was William Ockham, an English Franciscan Friar, who produced many attacks on the Catholic Church in the 1320s and 1330s that drew heavily on this English antipapal sentiment and the occurrence of the Great Schism to attack the right of a foreign entity to command the English church.¹⁴ The spirit Ockham’s teaching, if not his specific attacks, were taken up and expanded by John Wycliffe.

Born around 1330, Wycliffe became a priest and university professor who openly repudiated papal authority by claiming the Bible was the sole authority and that because ‘the Bible was the work of God [it] must be taken in all of its parts with qualifications.’¹⁵ Wycliffe also oversaw the first translation of the Bible into vernacular English, which would later be used by the Lollards in their itinerant preaching.¹⁶ Throughout the 1370s, Wycliffe produced treatises outlining his main beliefs, including:

1. A belief in apostolic poverty.
2. A corollary belief in the need for the divestment of ecclesiastical wealth.
3. A belief in the need for the opening of spiritual understanding to the laity, through a vernacular translation of the Bible and church liturgy.

¹² Diana Wood, ‘Rule from Europe? Four English views of papal authority in the fourteenth century,’ in *England and the Continent in the Middle Ages. Studies in Memory of Andrew Martindale. Proceedings of the 1996 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. John Mitchell and Matthew Moran, Harlaxton Medieval Studies, 8 (Stamford, CT: Shaun Tyas, 2000), 97–112.

¹³ Wood, ‘Rule from Europe?’ 97–112.

¹⁴ Wilks, ‘Royal patronage and anti-papalism from Ockham to Wyclif, 135–163.

¹⁵ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 84–85.

¹⁶ Aston, *Lollards and Reformers*, 14–17.

4. A belief that the papacy was engaged in the continuing and deliberate misinterpretation of scriptural mandates on church structure.
5. A repudiation of the Catholic position on transubstantiation during the sacrament of the Eucharist.

These theological positions, when combined with Wycliffe's interpretations of the Bible, led him to the conclusion that the office of the Pope, not just its current occupant, had been transformed into the Antichrist.¹⁷ Wycliffe continued to refine his theology, becoming a very vocal and visible critic of papal authority. As a result, he gained an ever-growing body of followers from diverse social and theological backgrounds. Lollardism's success was closely tied to the strong antipapal sentiment held by much of 14th-century English society.¹⁸ This sentiment strongly influenced Wycliffe during his formative years, as can be discerned in his works, such as *De Civili Dominio*¹⁹ and *De Potestate Papae*.²⁰

In *On the Office of King* (1379), Wycliffe expounds his belief that the King, not the Pope, should be the head of the Anglican Church.²¹ As Vaughan shows, this belief is grounded in Wycliffe's theology:

it was among the early doctrines of Wycliffe, that the authority of the magistrate should be final as to the wealth of the clergy, and as to the whole of their conduct, considered as members of society. 'Worldly clerks and feigned religions,' he observes, 'break and destroy the king's peace and his realm. For the prelates of this world, and the priests, high and low, say freely, and write in their law, that the king hath no jurisdiction nor power over their persons, nor over the goods of holy church. And yet Christ and his apostles were most obedient to kings and lords, and taught all men to be subject to them, and to serve them truly and cheerfully in bodily works, and to fear them, and honour them above all other men.'²²

¹⁷ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 84.

¹⁸ Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 217-219.

¹⁹ See: *De Civili Dominio*, Section 3.2.3.1.

²⁰ See: *De Potestate Papae*, Section 3.2.3.4.

²¹ Vaughan, *The Life and Opinions of John de Wycliffe*, 176.

²² Vaughan, *The Life and Opinions of John de Wycliffe*, 265.

This posture brought Wycliffe the support of King Edward III and his son, John of Gaunt, support that was strengthened when Wycliffe represented the monarchy at a meeting with the papal authorities in London in 1375.²³ That royal support, however, proved insufficient to shield Wycliffe from continued papal scrutiny. In 1377, Wycliffe was summoned by Bishop Courtenay of London to defend himself and his beliefs.²⁴ This meeting was interrupted by Gaunt and his friend Henry Lord Percy, preventing any resolution of the question of the orthodoxy of Wycliffe's beliefs and giving Wycliffe and his theology a reprieve from official condemnation.²⁵

This failure to resolve the orthodoxy of his theology at Courtney's trial allowed Wycliffe to continue writing and preaching. In doing so, he exhibited even further radicalization of his theology, culminating in the writing of *Triologus* in 1382.²⁶ His support was significantly diminished, however, when, in 1377, Gregory XI condemned Wycliffe's views as heretical, removing any question as to the legitimacy of Wycliffe's preaching.²⁷ This action alienated from Wycliffe many of those in power, including the wealthy conservative clergy and the nobility, leaving the peasantry and working classes as the bulk of his followers.²⁸ These remaining followers were the main actors in the Peasants' Revolt of 1381.

The Peasants' Revolt proved disastrous for Wycliffe, because he was accused of personally inflaming the peasantry, a charge he flatly denied.²⁹ At this time, he began to distance himself from the larger Lollard movement. '[A]s Luther did later, Wycliffe

²³ Wycliffe, *Tracts and Treatises of John de Wycliffe*, 15.

²⁴ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 84.

²⁵ Poole, *Wycliffe and Movements for Reform*, 77-78.

²⁶ Thomson, Williel, and Samuel Harrison Thomson. *The Latin Writings of John Wyclif: An Annotated Catalog*. (Toronto, Canada: Pontifical Institute, 1983), 79-83.

²⁷ Russell, *Dissent and Order* 86.

²⁸ John Charles Carrick, *Wycliffe and the Lollards* (Kessinger Publishing, 2010), 186.

²⁹ Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, 559.

eventually became frightened of the use to which his ideas were being put by popular extremists and issued a condemnation of the peasants' revolt of 1381.³⁰ This proved to be of no avail, because, when the Archbishop of Canterbury was murdered during the Peasants Revolt,³¹ Courtenay succeeded to the position, bringing with him his hatred of Wycliffe and of the heretical ideas with which Wycliffe had 'infected' the peasantry.³² Using his increased authority, Courtenay had 10 of Wycliffe's propositions condemned at the Blackfriars' Synod of 1382.³³ At the same time, he forced Wycliffe's followers at Oxford to disavow any allegiance to Wycliffe or his heretical theology, effectively purging the universities of Wycliffian thought.³⁴ This forced Wycliffe to leave Oxford, from whence he retired to Lutterworth, Leicestershire, where he had held the office of parish priest throughout his time at Oxford. He died of a stroke in 1384.

3.2.3. Wycliffe's Major Works

As discussed in Chapter 1, Wycliffe's works were rarely written down for dissemination. Much of his work appears in the form of lectures and sermons, recorded after they were delivered and from memory. However, Wycliffe published several treatises outlining his theological and social beliefs, culled from his lectures and sermons. The five most important of these works, discussed below, are *On Civil Lordship (De Civili Dominio, 1378)*, *On the Church (De Ecclesia, 1378)*, *The Truth of the Sacred Scripture (De Veritate*

³⁰ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 83.

³¹ Carrick, *Wycliffe and the Lollards*. Wilson shows how the main argument for Wycliffe's involvement in the Peasant's Revolt came from the pre-execution confession of John Ball, one of the leaders of the revolt who was excommunicated, and why it should be discounted. John Laird Wilson, *John Wycliffe, Patriot and Reformer* (New York, NY: Funk and Wagnalls, 1884), 186–189.

³² Aston, *Lollards and Reformers*, 40.

³³ John Laird Wilson, *John Wycliffe, Patriot and Reformer: The Morning Star of the Reformation*, (New York, NY: Funk and Wagnalls, 1884), 189.

³⁴ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 85.

Sacrae Scripturae [1378]), *The Role of the Clergy* (*De Potestate Papae* [1379]), and *The Trialogus* (1382).

3.2.3.1. On Civil Lordship (*De Civili Dominio*)

One of Wycliffe's earliest works was *De Civili Dominio*, written in 1378. This work outlines Wycliffe's support for monarchs, whose rule he believed was derived from God.³⁵ If the powers of both King and Pope are God-given, then one should not interfere in the sphere of the other. However, Wycliffe saw the efforts of the Pope and his prelates as undermining this separation, stating:

Commonly, the new laws which the clergy have made, are cunningly devised to bring down the power of lords and kings which God ordained, and to make themselves lords, and to have all things at their doom. Certainly it seemeth, that these worldly prelates would more completely destroy the power of kings and lords, which God ordained for the government of Christian men, than God destroyeth the power even of the fiend.³⁶

The Pope's interference in secular affairs supported Wycliffe's view of the papal office's apostasy.

This work also presents one of Wycliffe's key theories, namely, that of 'Lordship' as it relates to God and Man. Poole provides an excellent analysis of this work and its effects on Wycliffe's future theological writings.³⁷ As Poole states, 'Lordship and service, in Wycliffe's scheme, are the two ends of the chain that links humanity to God; they are necessarily correspondent terms, and the one cannot exist without the other'³⁸ For Wycliffe, this is the crux of man's relationship to God:

A man may have a right, or may have power, although he can exercise neither; he cannot have lordship, which includes the notion both of right and power, unless there is something over which he is lord. God himself was not God

³⁵ Vaughan, *The Life and Opinions of John de Wycliffe*, 228.

³⁶ Vaughan, *The Life and Opinions of John de Wycliffe*, 228–229.

³⁷ Poole, *Wycliffe and Movements for Reform*, 89–99.

³⁸ Poole, *Wycliffe and Movements for Reform*, 87.

until after the creation, a fact which is shown, Wycliffe considers, by the employment of the distinctive name first in the second chapter of Genesis. But God's lordship is of a unique character because, all being his creatures, all owe him service, and all alike.³⁹

To Wycliffe, 'God rules not mediately through the rule of subject vassals, as other kings hold lordship, since immediately an of himself he makes, sustains, and governs all that which he possesses, and helps it to perform its works according to other uses which he requires.'⁴⁰

Wycliffe spoke of the rule of Christ and its importance in establishing a religion that is superior to all others:

If Christ had gone, in the least degree, more into detail, the rule of His religion would have become to a certain extent imperfect; but as it now stands, layman and cleric, married man and monk, servant and master, men in every position of life, may live in one and the same service, under Christ's rule. The evangelical law, moreover, contains no special ceremonies whereby the universal observance of it would have been made impossible; and therefore the Christian rule and religion, according to the form of it handed down to us in the gospel, is of all religions the most perfect, and the only one which is in and by itself good.⁴¹

This notion of Lordship extended to the secular world as well. Indeed, it was one of the underpinnings of feudalism that characterized medieval society.⁴² However, Wycliffe believed that the relationship between the Lord and each individual was direct, with no need for intervening masters:

Here we reach the essential inference which brings Wycliffe's theory into connection with practical life, 'God rules not mediately through the rule of subject vassals, as other kings hold lordship, since immediately and of himself he makes, sustains, and governs all that which he possesses, and helps it to perform its works according to other uses which he requires.' There is a feudalism here, but a feudalism in which there are no mesne lords; all, men 'hold' directly of God, with differences no doubt in accidentals, but in the main fact of their tenure all alike.⁴³

³⁹ Poole, *Wycliffe and Movements for Reform*, 87-88.

⁴⁰ From: Wycliffe's *De Civil Domino*, quoted in Poole, *Wycliffe and Movements for Reform*, 88.

⁴¹ From: Wycliffe's *De Civil Domino*, quoted in Carrick, *Wycliffe and the Lollards*, 183.

⁴² Poole, *Wycliffe and Movements for Reform*, 87-88.

⁴³ Poole, *Wycliffe and Movements for Reform*, 88.

As Poole explains:

It is this principle of the dependence of the individual man upon God alone and upon none else that distinguishes Wycliffe's from any other system of the Middle Ages. He alone ventured to strike at the root of the hierarchical privilege by vindicating for each separate person an equal place in the eyes of God. By this formula all laymen became priests, and all priests laymen, so far as their religious position was concerned: all held of God, and on the same terms of service.⁴⁴

This direct relationship between God and each individual became the core of Wycliffe's belief system, and is echoed in the teachings of the Early Quakers.⁴⁵

Poole analyzes how this principle threatened the underpinnings of the secular authority, showing that although:

it is clear that the principle by itself was one acknowledged by every Christian; it was Wycliffe's application of it that made it peculiar and dangerous. What he did was to transfer the conception from the religious to the political sphere. The rank which a man has in the eyes of God must involve his rank, consequence, position, all that he is or has, in the eyes of men. If by sin he forfeits the former, necessarily also the latter goes with it. ... These are shown clearly in his book *On Civil Lordship*...

He begins the book with the proposition that no one in mortal sin has any right to any gift of God, while on the other hand every man standing in grace has not only a right to, but has in fact, every gift of God. He takes literally the aphorism which an old tradition inserted in the Book of Proverbs, *The faithful man hath the whole world of riches, but the unfaithful hath not even a farthing*; and he supports it with much fullness and ingenuity of argumentation. The first part of the thesis is indeed a legitimate following out of the doctrine which Saint Augustine had enforced, of the negative character of evil. '*Sin...is nothing, and men, when they sin, become nothing*': if then, argued Wycliffe, sinners, as such, are nothing; it is evident that they can possess nothing. . . . [A]ll lordship is conferred by God on the consideration of a man's returning to him continually due service: when however a man falls into mortal sin he defrauds his lord-in-chief of this service, and thus rightfully incurs forfeiture and is deprived of all lordship whatsoever.⁴⁶

⁴⁴ Poole, *Wycliffe and Movements for Reform*, 88.

⁴⁵ As shown in Chapter 2, Section 2.5.7.

⁴⁶ Poole, *Wycliffe and Movements for Reform*, 88–90.

These beliefs led many secular authorities to back Wycliffe. This treatise, although having radical theological beliefs, appealed to those who derived their power not from God, but from their subjects.⁴⁷ It elevated them above their subjects the same way God was elevated above man. Although these beliefs meant that a lord had to uphold his own virtue to maintain his lordship, ultimately Wycliffe was legitimizing the secular feudal system by tying it to God's relationship to man.

3.2.3.2. On the Church (*De Ecclesia*)

In *De Ecclesia*, Wycliffe outlines his beliefs on the nature of the 'true' church. This work was an attempt by Wycliffe to more fully illustrate his view of the defining characteristics of the Church. It begins, 'Christ's church is his spouse that hath three parts,' continuing:

The first part is in bliss with Christ, head of the church, and containeth angels and blessed men that now be in heaven. The second part of the church be saints in purgatory, and these sin not anew, but purge their old sins. And many errors fallen in praying for these saints, and since they all are dead in body, Christ's words may be taken of them: sue we Christ as our life, and let the dead bury the dead. The third part of the church are true men that here live, that shall be afterwards saved in heaven, and who live here the life of Christian men. The first part is called the *overcoming* part, the middle is called the *sleeping*, the third is called the *fighting*. And all these make one church, and the head of this church is Jesus Christ, both God and man. This church is mother to every man who shall be saved, and containeth no other.⁴⁸

According to Vaughan, Wycliffe is saying that:

In the present world, no one can possibly know themselves to be a member of the church of Christ except as he is enabled to live a holy life; few, if any, being so taught of God as to know their ordination to the bliss of heaven. In allusion to the Urban crusade, he censures the folly of men who 'fight for the

⁴⁷ Carrick, *Wycliffe and the Lollards*, 79.

⁴⁸ Wycliffe, *Tracts and Treatises of John de Wycliffe*, 74.

pope more than for belief,' and who in so doing probably 'fight for the fiend.'⁴⁹

In the final section, Wycliffe explains how the Church had been corrupted by secular power, 'founding his statements, partly, in "belief," or Holy Scripture, and partly on "common chronicles."' ⁵⁰ In this section, he defines the church militant, 'described as consisting of persons who conform themselves to "the example of Christ, to come to heaven as he came,"' ⁵¹ finally stating:

And thus the apostles of Christ filled the world with God's grace. But long after, as chronicles say, the fiend had envy thereat, and by Silvester, priest of Rome, he brought in a new guile, and moved the emperor of Rome to endow his church. When the life of the priest was thus changed, his name was changed. He was not called the apostle, or the disciple of Christ, but he was called the pope, and head of all holy church: and afterwards came other names, by the feigning of hypocrites, so that some say he is even with the manhead of Christ, and highest vicar of Christ, to do on earth whatever he liketh; and some flourish other names and say that he is most blessed father, because hereof cometh benefices which the priest giveth to men, for Simon Magus never more laboured in simony than do these priests. And so God would suffer the fiend no longer to reign in one such priest only, but for the thing which they had done, made division among two, so that men might the more lightly in Christ's name overcome both. For as a virtue is stronger when it is gathered, than if it be scattered; so malice is stronger when it is gathered in one person, and it is of less strength when it is dispersed among many. ⁵²

In *De Ecclesia*, Wycliffe uses scriptural examples to support his theory on the proper form of the 'primitive,' and thus the 'true' church. This definition becomes the foundation for the rest of Wycliffe's writings, because he uses it to attack the rule of the papacy.

⁴⁹ Vaughn's Commentary in Wycliffe, *Tracts and Treatises of John de Wycliffe*, 75.

⁵⁰ Wycliffe, *Tracts and Treatises of John de Wycliffe*, 75.

⁵¹ Wycliffe, *Tracts and Treatises of John de Wycliffe*, 75.

⁵² Wycliffe, *Tracts and Treatises of John de Wycliffe*, 75–76.

3.2.3.3. The Truth of the Sacred Scripture (*De Veritate Sacrae Scripturae*)

Hudson explains how, in *De Veritate Sacrae Scripturae*, Wycliffe ‘examined the basis of Christian evidence,’⁵³ namely the Bible, outlining his reasoning behind his belief in absolute scriptural authority as well as using biblical examples to explain the evidence in support of Christian belief.

As Carrick states:

By far the most outstanding feature of Wycliffe’s life and work is the claim he makes for the absolute supremacy, sufficiency, and infallibility of the Scripture; and his work, *Of the Truth of Holy Scripture*, in Latin, develops his views in a most clear and explicit manner. Christ is the author of the Scripture, and as the Word of God, it should be in the hands and heart of everyone, cleric and lay—a right denied by the Church of Rome.⁵⁴

Carrick also concludes that Wycliffe’s ‘perpetual appeal was to Scripture as against tradition or authority, and he called loudly for a return to the primitive Church as represented by the early Fathers to whom Scripture was everything, and whose brightest wish was its universal diffusion.’⁵⁵ Russell agrees that, for Wycliffe, ‘the Bible was the work of God and must be taken in all of its parts, without qualification,’⁵⁶ and must be used as basis for reestablishing the primitive, and thus ‘true,’ church.

As Vaughan describes:

In its commencement, Wycliffe makes mention of the clergy as attempting to vindicate their claims to ecclesiastical endowments by appealing to the provisions of the Jewish law in that particular. But the reply given, as on many similar occasions, is, that the Levitical priesthood were wholly destitute of endowments in the sense intended – that the provision made in their case was, that they should not be possessed of landed property in any shape, and that they should depend wholly on the current tithes and offerings of the people. Such was the arrangement made in respect to the support of the priesthood under the old law; and secular lords are reminded that they are

⁵³ Anne Hudson, *Selections from English Wycliffite Writings* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 2.

⁵⁴ Carrick, *Wycliffe and the Lollards*, 77.

⁵⁵ Carrick, *Wycliffe and the Lollards*, 185.

⁵⁶ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 84-85.

competent to reduce the Christian priesthood to the same condition, and that it behooves them to do so.⁵⁷

3.2.3.4. The Role of the Clergy (*De Potestate Papae*)

In *De Potestate Papae*, Wycliffe examined the proper role of the clergy, and their responsibilities and duties. This work was translated by Mathew, and about it he states:

Of the twelve books which the Summa Theologiae contains, the ninth has hitherto not received the attention to which its contents entitle it. In point of importance only one of all the twelve can be compared to it: *De Ecclesia*, which, together with *De Veritate Sacre Scripture*, precedes *De Potestate Pape*; and this work would present many obscure passages, but for the knowledge of the other two. It is because this book was unknown to the biographers of the English Reformer that not one of them has correctly described his attitude in regard to the Papacy: for it contains his theory of true and false Papacy, which must be known in order to understand the position which he takes on this subject in his later works.⁵⁸

Echoing his assertion that ‘some should help by prayer, some by good speech, some by worldly power, and some by good life,’⁵⁹ Wycliffe defined the proper place of the clergy in the larger social hierarchy. They were to work in supporting the individual’s spiritual journey, not directing it. The Bible ‘was to be understood not necessarily by professors or prelates but by the individual Christian reading it prayerfully with the help of the Holy Spirit.’⁶⁰ The clergy’s most important duty was the dissemination of the Gospels, not their

⁵⁷ Vaughn’s Commentary in Wycliffe, *Tracts and Treatises of John de Wycliffe*, 72. Vaughan continues:

‘This tract consists of eight quarto pages. It contains an allusion to the council in London, which had condemned the doctrine of Wycliffe, as opposed, in the above sense, to ecclesiastical endowments. It contains the following passage also, which is equally decisive in respect to the late date of this production: ‘Either God’s law is false, or the realm of England shall be punished sharply, for persecuting poor priests, only for saying that Antichrist should be ashamed of their manner of life, and that the bread of the altar is very God’s body, as the Gospel saith, and as common faith holds.’ In attempting the needed reformation, ‘some should help by prayer, some by good speech, some by worldly power, and some by good life.’

⁵⁸ John Wycliffe, *Tractatus de Potestate Pape*, trans. David Matthew. (London, UK: Trubner and Co., 1907), I.

⁵⁹ Wycliffe, *Tracts and Treatises of John de Wycliffe*, 72.

⁶⁰ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 85.

interpretation or suppression.⁶¹ For Wycliffe, the clergy were to be equal members of the community in which they lived, providing their scripturally appointed duties in exchange for the community's support in the form of tithes, which could be withheld if they proved less than virtuous.⁶² They were not to be disengaged, educated foreigners more concerned with maintaining their privileges than with preaching the Gospel.⁶³ When combined with the views outlined in *De Civili Dominio*, Wycliffe was positing a medieval society with clearly delineated roles for the individual in their service to God and with specific spheres of influence for the secular and ecclesiastical authorities.

Wycliffe leveled harsh criticism at the Pope, claiming that:

If he alone can be Pope who is the holiest of all, does it not follow, as a necessary consequence, that every sin which he commits must strip him of his Pontifical garments? Yet is not this contrary to the law of the Church, according to which a Pope may only be deposed for heresy?⁶⁴

For Wycliffe, the Pope and his prelates had severely erred by concerning themselves more with temporal wealth and power:

By hoarding up riches that belong to the poor, and by accumulating temporal dignities, the clergy sins, from the lowest ranks even to the Pope. He should be the holiest of them all, since holiness alone should give him that title. If he is, God has chosen him; if not, he cannot be Pope, since God's choice is of the most worthy. It is not the Pope's business to grant livings or to decide questions of political strife. No one can claim the Papal dignity, that has not been called thereto by God. Whoso, through pride or greed assumes these honours is self-excommunicated; they therefore that do so evidently care only for what is temporal and disregard the things of the Spirit. And so it were better for the Church, were there no such 'Imperial' Popes and were the Church, as formerly, to elect a Chief, or (as did the Apostles of the heathens) to select someone whom they could depose if they saw that the spirit of Satan was in him.⁶⁵

⁶¹ Aston, *Lollards and Reformers*, 15.

⁶² Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 224, Aston, *Lollards and Reformers*, 12.

⁶³ Wycliffe, *Tractatus de Potestate Pape*, xxxix.

⁶⁴ Wycliffe, *Tractatus de Potestate Pape*, xxxix.

⁶⁵ Wycliffe, *Tractatus de Potestate Pape*, xxxviii.

De Potestate Papae was firmly rooted in the Wycliffite ideal of a church based on the examples of primitive Christianity provided in Scripture.⁶⁶ To Wycliffe, the proper role of the Clergy was to help spread the word of the Gospel, to help each individual maintain the proper place in God's hierarchy (i.e., lordship), to reject the temptations of the secular world by maintaining a strict form of 'apostolic poverty,' and to help maintain the pathways traveled by the 'true' church in the clergy's search for salvation.⁶⁷

3.2.3.5. Trialogus

Wycliffe's final major work was his *Trialogus*. Hudson explains that 'the lengthy *Trialogus* provides a summary of Wycliffe's final position, bringing together the views which he had reached during his life.'⁶⁸ Written and published in four books, it provides the most detailed defense of Wycliffe's theological and social philosophies. Vaughan outlines this work thusly:

The work of our Reformer which bears the name of the *Trialogus* is so called because it consists of a series of colloquies between three speakers. The names of these speakers are ALITHIA, PSEUDIS, and PHRONESIS – or Truth, Falsehood, and Wisdom. The opinions and reasonings of Alithia, accordingly, are to be regarded as those of Truth; those of Pseudis as being the contrary of truth; while in the person of Phronesis, Wycliffe himself speaks; and in setting forth his judgment on the points at issue, he generally assigns such reasons for his opinions as tend to expose the sophistry of Pseudis, and to sustain the views of Alithia.

. . . Thus in the *Trialogus*, the language of Pseudis gives expression to the captious and skeptical spirit of the middle age on the great questions relating to philosophy, morals, and theology; while the speeches of Alithia and Phronesis, embody the sounder views of those times on such subjects, and

⁶⁶ Hudson, *Selections from English Wycliffite Writings*, 2.

⁶⁷ See: Section 3.2.3.2

⁶⁸ Hudson, *Selections from English Wycliffite Writings*, 3.

along with the opinions generally received, come those bolder utterances which distinguish the writings of Wycliffe as those of a Reformer.⁶⁹

The *Triologus* was the culmination of Wycliffe's works, showing the changes and growth to his theological paradigm from his early to his later career.⁷⁰ An example of this development is Wycliffe's view of the authority of the Bible. Whereas in *De Veritate Sacrae Scripturae*, Wycliffe argued for a strict interpretation of the letter of the Bible, in which 'every word was infallibly true,' by the time of the *Triologus*, 'he modified this to say that the underlying sense of the words was eternally true.'⁷¹ Much of what Wycliffe had explored in his earlier works is also treated in the *Triologus*, from the beliefs on 'lordship' to the basis of Christian faith and practice. The *Triologus*, as the latest and most comprehensive of Wycliffe's works, can thus be seen as the final distillation of Wycliffite philosophy and theology.

3.2.4. Wycliffe's Theology

At the foundation of much of Wycliffe's theology was his belief that the path to salvation was blocked by the inability of the common man to read and interpret the Bible on his own. Wycliffe argued that Scripture was the sole authority in regards to all matters spiritual and worldly.⁷² Carrick states that Wycliffe's 'perpetual appeal was to Scripture as against tradition or authority, and he called loudly for a return to the primitive Church as represented by the early Fathers to whom Scripture was everything, and whose brightest wish was its universal diffusion.'⁷³ Wycliffe believed that 'the Bible was to be understood not necessarily by professors and prelates but by the individual Christian reading it prayerfully

⁶⁹ Vaughn's Commentary in Wycliffe, *Tractatus de Potestate Pape*, 108–109.

⁷⁰ See: 'Wycliffe as a Thinker and Writer; His Philosophical and Theological System,' in Gotthard Lechler and Peter Lorimer, *John Wycliffe and His English Precursors* (London, UK: Religious Tract Society, 1904), 223.

⁷¹ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 84.

⁷² Carrick, *Wycliffe and the Lollards*, 185.

⁷³ Carrick, *Wycliffe and the Lollards*, 185.

with the help of the Holy Spirit.⁷⁴ This would ensure proper worship and belief, because the individual could measure his conduct and that of the community against the Bible's mandates.

Wycliffe contended that, by keeping Scripture solely in Latin, the Catholic Church intended the laity to remain ignorant of the true message found in the Bible, specifically as it relates to the proper form of worship⁷⁵ and the role the clergy should play in society.⁷⁶ Because he maintained that biblical study and discussion were the sole province of trained clergy or cloistered monks, Wycliffe concluded that the papacy was attempting to prevent the laity from seeing just how far the contemporary Catholic Church had strayed from Christ's original message.⁷⁷

Along with many of his contemporaries, Wycliffe believed most of the clergy had become corrupted by concerns of the secular world, as witnessed by the vast amounts of accumulated wealth controlled by the Catholic Church, which contrasted sharply with the extreme poverty of most of the laity.⁷⁸ One of the most reviled practices of the clergy was the act of gaining multiple ecclesiastical offices to receive the tax revenues attendant to those offices without ever intending to provide the required duties of each office, thus increasing the cleric's personal wealth at the expense of the parishioners' souls. This practice, called 'plurality,' was one of the main targets of reforming movements through much of Christian

⁷⁴ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 85.

⁷⁵ Vaughan, *The Life and Opinions of John de Wycliffe*, 28.

⁷⁶ Vaughan, *The Life and Opinions of John de Wycliffe*, 28.

⁷⁷ This position was held by many reforming movements, see: Russell, *Dissent and Order*; Ozment, *The Age of Reform*.

⁷⁸ Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 227-228.

history.⁷⁹ Another was the act of ‘simony,’ or the selling of church offices to those who could afford them as opposed to those who were worthy. As Vaughan shows:

One prolific source of this corruption, is said to be the prevalence of simony. Most of these dignitaries enter upon their office by such means, and it is said to cleave to them ‘as a leprosy all through’—a depraved priesthood everywhere producing a depraved people.⁸⁰

Reformers, such as Wycliffe, lamented that, on the rare occasion a bishop actually came to one of his many parishes, his secular duties, such as land management, tended to dominate his time and thinking, taking precedence over his spiritual duties.⁸¹ For Wycliffe, ‘But the simony of the court of Rome doth most harm, for it is most common, and done most under the colour of holiness, and robbeth most our land, both of men and treasure.’⁸²

Wycliffe spoke often against the selling of indulgences, precipitating his writing of *De Ecclesia*.⁸³ To Wycliffe, the Pope:

may give no indulgence, neither to men in purgatory, nor to them that are prescitti, that is to say, that are to be damned, or are now damned... the apostles gave no indulgences: that such indulgences can be of no value, unless we can be sure that the Pope who grants them is himself saved; whereas we are certain that many popes who have granted such indulgences are damned. That the indulgences bear internal evidence in themselves of being fictitious, and of none effect; and that the sale of indulgences, if the indulgences were of any value, would be simoniacal and sinful.⁸⁴

In Wycliffe’s view, once the clergy had been corrupted by the concerns of the secular world, they had abandoned their appointed duties, creating a crisis of spirituality for those in their congregations.⁸⁵ Like the Donatists of early Christian history, Wycliffe believed that sacraments delivered by a priest in sin were invalid, thus inhibiting or even completely

⁷⁹ E.A. Livingston, ed., *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1977, 2000), 534.

⁸⁰ Vaughan, *The Life and Opinions of John de Wycliffe*, 15.

⁸¹ Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 227.

⁸² Vaughan, *The Life and Opinions of John de Wycliffe*, 15.

⁸³ See: Section 3.2.3.2

⁸⁴ Wycliffe, John (attributed to), *An Apology for the Lollard Doctrines*, (UK: J.B. Nichols, 1842), xxv.

⁸⁵ Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 215-216.

blocking the ability for the souls in their care to reach salvation.⁸⁶ The Donatists were reacting to those who had renounced their Christian beliefs under Roman torture, only to return to the faith after Constantine's conversion, feeling this lapse in faith was tantamount to heresy.⁸⁷ Similarly, Wycliffe looked at the infection of the clergy by secular concerns as negating their ability to faithfully perform their spiritual responsibilities. This rendered the clergy not just obsolete, but it also transformed the entire ecumenical system into an impediment to salvation.

Christ himself had warned against focusing attention to affairs of the secular world at the expense of spiritual well-being, a message clearly evident in the Bible, but only to those who could read it.⁸⁸ Wycliffe's solution to the obstacle represented by the clergy was to translate and distribute the Bible, as well as to perform the entire mass, in English.⁸⁹ Wycliffe believed that this would enable each person to understand and interpret Scripture without the mediation of a preacher, giving each individual the opportunity—and responsibility—for personal salvation.⁹⁰ Translation of the Bible into the vernacular was a radical departure from Catholic doctrine, because it allowed the responsibility for salvation to shift from the Church to the individual, further eroding the need for a trained clergy.

For Wycliffe, every individual had to be an active participant in their own spiritual journey. Because Wycliffe's beliefs were firmly based on Scripture, his treatise on the truth of Holy Scripture, *De Veritate Sacre Scripturae*, argued for the literal divine inspiration of the Bible, one that should be strictly followed.⁹¹ When coupled with his belief in personal

⁸⁶ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 84.

⁸⁷ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 84.

⁸⁸ Ozment, *The Age of Reform*, 192.

⁸⁹ Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 220-222, 232-233.

⁹⁰ Hudson, *Premature Reformation*, 66.

⁹¹ K.B. McFarlane, *Wycliffe and English Non-Conformity* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Publishers, 1972), 77; Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, 511-516.

scriptural study, what emerges is a theology with a mystical underpinning. As McGinn argues, ‘The biblical basis for Christian mysticism is evident in many ways, not least the fact that the very term *mystical* (Greek: *mystikos*; Latin: *mysticus*) entered Christianity primarily as a way to describe the inner sense of the Bible.’⁹² By arguing that lay persons should directly treat with the Bible, Wycliffe was arguing for a direct interaction with God in a previously unthinkable way under the doctrine of the Catholic Church. Although Leff has argued that Lollard beliefs had no affinity with mysticism, saying that ‘There was no inner search for God in the soul or withdrawal from the world in order to reach him,’⁹³ it is clear from Wycliffe’s work that he believed that the individual and his immediate spiritual community could not rely on some foreign agent for salvation.⁹⁴ As McGinn states:

Christian Mysticism is rooted in the reading of the Bible. The mystic, however, does not seek an academic understanding of the scriptural text...the mystic wants to penetrate to the living source of the biblical message, that is, to the Divine Word who speaks in and through...words and texts. This means that the Bible has been both the origin and the norm for Christian mystics down through the ages.⁹⁵

This need for the individual to be responsible for his own salvation, tied to his own agency, was a mystical journey, in which one had to experience God on one’s own terms and not based on someone else’s teaching.

The Catholic hierarchy rightly perceived in Wycliffe’s teachings a direct threat to their power and authority, and viewed his growing popularity with alarm and hostility.⁹⁶ The papacy had long argued that the common people were incapable of properly interpreting the Bible on their own. Without the clergy’s shepherding, inevitable errors of theology and

⁹² McGinn, *The Essential Writings of Christian Mysticism*, 1.

⁹³ Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, 577.

⁹⁴ See: Section 3.2.3.1

⁹⁵ McGinn, *The Essential Writings of Christian Mysticism*, 1.

⁹⁶ Hudson, *Premature Reformation*, 73.

understanding would result, and these errors would lead the laity to espouse heretical ideas and practices.⁹⁷ The papacy advanced this argument by insisting that, to study the Scriptures without the risk for reaching heretical interpretations of the text, an individual needed to undergo the rigorous training available only in papal-sponsored universities or the cloistered halls of the mendicant orders.⁹⁸ The perceived need to protect the laity from their own heretical misreading of the Bible was one of the primary reasons the Catholic Church strenuously resisted attempts to translate the Bible into any vernacular language. While ‘certain vernacular versions existed in orthodox circles in various European countries, [these were] intended for the use only of rulers and the highest nobility’ and not for the general lay population.⁹⁹ As part of this resistance, the Church labeled as heretics those who espoused this ideal, such as Wycliffe, and later Hus.¹⁰⁰

3.2.5. Wycliffe’s Practice

Wycliffe posited that the 14th-century Catholic Church was a direct affront to Christianity and that the office of pope had become the Antichrist.¹⁰¹ The radical departure of the Church from biblical mandates on church structure, as Wycliffe interpreted them, together with the continued refusal of papal authorities to listen to his enlightened arguments for reform reinforced Wycliffe’s belief in papal apostasy. From this theological position, Wycliffe and those Oxford academics that held similar views attacked the foundations of the Catholic Church, arguing that:

1. The clergy has been corrupted.

⁹⁷ Hudson, *Premature Reformation*, 75.

⁹⁸ Somerset, *Lollards and Their Influence*, 39.

⁹⁹ Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 231.

¹⁰⁰ Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 228-233.

¹⁰¹ Derrick Pitard, ‘A Select Bibliography for Lollard Studies,’ in *Lollards and Their Influence*, eds. Fiona Somerset, Jill C. Havens, and Derrick G. Pitard (Suffolk, UK; Rochester, NY: Boydell Press, 2003), 54.

2. The Pope seeks to oppress the ‘true’ form of worship.
3. The Bible is the sole and final authority on spiritual matters.
4. Each individual is called by Christ to discern his message for himself.
5. This need for individual discernment requires that there be a vernacular translation of the Bible.
6. As a corollary to individual discernment, preaching should be freely open to all regardless of formal education.
7. The faithful should emulate the ‘true church’ of Christ, including his poverty and that of his Apostles, as presented in the Bible, and not what the Pope said.¹⁰²

The ideas posited by Wycliffe quickly attracted converts from many different levels of society; although notably not a significant number of aristocrats, unlike more successful movements, such as the Cathars and Hussites.¹⁰³ Wycliffe had tapped into a feeling of extreme disenchantment with the papal authorities, whose ultimate allegiance was to Rome, not the communities whose souls they were charged with shepherding.¹⁰⁴ Once Wycliffite theology began to spread, offering a radical departure from the status quo, many were attracted by the possibilities of a personal communion with God, free of interference from the corrupted clergy.¹⁰⁵ The Lollards began to preach Wycliffe’s teachings throughout the English countryside. This outreach transported the growing conflict between Wycliffe and the Catholic Church out of the cloistered realm of traditional theological discourse and into the world of the uneducated laity, an escalation the papacy could not ignore.

¹⁰² Hudson, *Premature Reformation*, 55.

¹⁰³ Estep, *Renaissance and Reformation*, 54.

¹⁰⁴ Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 215-216, 229.

¹⁰⁵ Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, 567.

Wycliffe initially organized the Lollards into a sect of itinerant preachers, sent in teams of two into the countryside and charged with educating society regarding the new revelations available to them through personal study of Scripture.¹⁰⁶ These preachers bore the following characteristics:

1. They traveled from town to town and had no permanent home or base of operations.¹⁰⁷
2. They preached their message wherever they could gather an audience; in fields, churches, marketplaces, or private homes.¹⁰⁸
3. They dressed in plain clothes.¹⁰⁹
4. They preached in the vernacular, using Wycliffe's English translation of the Bible as the source of scripture.¹¹⁰

These preachers were drawn both from within and outside academic circles. They welcomed any individuals who were open to their message, and they were able to find many with whom it resonated in the turbulent world of 14th-century English society.¹¹¹ This gave Lollardism a vitality and appeal that was not dependent solely on Wycliffe's leadership or personality. As a result, Lollardism (unlike many other fringe sects) was able to thrive after Wycliffe's banishment from Oxford, his distancing of himself from the movement in 1382, and his subsequent death in 1384. The movement that Wycliffe started continued to fight against papal corruption, working for reform of the church and the dissemination of their newly translated Bible.¹¹²

¹⁰⁶ Aston, *Lollards and Reformers*, 215.

¹⁰⁷ Aston, *Lollards and Reformers*, 215.

¹⁰⁸ Similar to the Early Quaker practice of itinerant preaching, see: Chapter 2, Section 2.5.6

¹⁰⁹ Aston, *Lollards and Reformers*, 16–17.

¹¹⁰ Poole, *Wycliffe and Movements for Reform*, 101.

¹¹¹ Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 214–215, 234–241.

¹¹² Hudson, *Studies in the Transmission of Wycliffe's Writings*, 92.

3.2.6. Political and Social Impact of Wycliffe

Wycliffe's entry into politics can be traced to *De Civili Dominio*, described above. In it, Wycliffe outlined his beliefs as to the proper relationship between the secular government, as represented by the King, and the Church, as represented by the local clergy.¹¹³ Wycliffe did not include the Pope, because he had already shown that the papacy should not be the viewed as the representation of the 'true' church.¹¹⁴ Wycliffe held that, if the clergy abused their positions to misuse ecclesiastical property, then the King, in his God-given role, was duty-bound to take them away from the abusers. It was this tract that helped attract the support of various nobles, such as John Oldcastle, who protect and defended Wycliffe early in his career.¹¹⁵

One of the greatest legacies of Wycliffe is the publication of the first English translation of the Bible and, through the Lollard itinerant preachers, the dissemination and use of that translation throughout England. Wycliffe was thus able to open up a new dimension of spiritual understanding to the laity.¹¹⁶ For the first time, the divine revelation available from scriptural study was available to anyone literate in English, helping to plant one of the initial seeds of English Puritanism.¹¹⁷ Wycliffe's insistence in the right and necessity of personal biblical study in the vernacular was not novel, but Lollardism's success at dissemination was, and it became the inspiration for many subsequent reforming movements, specifically that of John Hus in Bohemia.¹¹⁸ The process of translation also had

¹¹³ Poole, *Wycliffe and Movements for Reform*, 87.

¹¹⁴ Poole, *Wycliffe and Movements for Reform*, 87.

¹¹⁵ Poole, *Wycliffe and Movements for Reform*, 79.

¹¹⁶ Somerset, *Lollards and Their Influence*, 99.

¹¹⁷ Steiner, 'Lollardy and the Legal Document,' in *Lollards and Their Influence*, ed. by Fiona Somerset, Jill C. Havens, and Derrick G. Pitard. (Rochester, NY: Boydell & Brewer Inc., 2003), 162.

¹¹⁸ Steiner, 'Lollardy and the Legal Document,' 162.

the effect of giving the English language a stamp of legitimacy, as the Word of God was now contained within its boundaries.¹¹⁹

Heresies are invariably directly influenced by the time, society, and location in which they arise, and Wycliffe's was no exception, being uniquely English in its tone and temper.¹²⁰ Initially emanating from the bastion of clerical education, Oxford University, Lollardism spread throughout much of English society, and its teaching influenced religious thought for the 300 years after its demise, eventually contributing to the birth of Puritan theology.¹²¹ The antipapal sentiment existing throughout 14th-century English society gave Wycliffe and his followers at Oxford an audience primed to support their efforts against the Pope, even if they did not agree with Wycliffe's specific theories.¹²² Lollardism 'was a potent combination of intellectual concepts, moral reformism, and popular resentment,'¹²³ which had powerful effects in England and abroad for decades to come. Wycliffe's desire to restore a primitive form of Christianity, his attempt to separate the secular and spiritual realms, his insistence on lay participation in one's own salvation, the translation of the Bible, and the subsequent acceptance of English as a respectable language were all lasting effects of Wycliffe on English society, reappearing in the English branch of the Reformation. The strength of Wycliffe's teachings came from their appeal to both the educated and the ignorant, those living in the country and in the larger cities. It was truly a product of late-14th-century English society.

¹¹⁹ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 99.

¹²⁰ Steiner, 'Lollardy and the Legal Document,' 159.

¹²¹ Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, 602-605.

¹²² Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, 530-535.

¹²³ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 82.

3.2.7. Section Summary

This section first examined the history of Wycliffe, his life and times, as well as how he was affected by and affected the world around him. The support he received from the nobility and fellow Oxford professors, the Catholic response to Wycliffe, and the effect of the Peasants Revolt were discussed.¹²⁴ Next, Wycliffe's major works were discussed, including *On Civil Lordship (De Civili Dominio)*, *On the Church (De Ecclesia)*, *The Truth of the Sacred Scripture (De Veritate Sacrae Scripturae)*, *The Role of the Clergy (De Potestate Papae)*, and *The Trialogus*.¹²⁵ These works provide the foundation for the next three subsections:

- Theology: Wherein Wycliffe's theological points on the apostasy of the clergy and papacy, the need for personal salvation based on scriptural study, return to a primitive church, and the need for a vernacular translation of the Bible are discussed.¹²⁶
- Practice: Wherein Wycliffe's effect on different aspects of society, his organizing of itinerant pairs of preachers, and his legacy are discussed.¹²⁷
- Political and Social Impact: Wherein the political and social ramifications of Wycliffe's theology are discussed, specifically the effects of his vernacular translation of the Bible, the real-world application of a return to a primitive church, and the 'Englishness' of his beliefs.¹²⁸

¹²⁴ Section 3.2.2.

¹²⁵ Section 3.2.3.

¹²⁶ Section 3.2.4.

¹²⁷ Section 3.2.5.

¹²⁸ Section 3.2.6.

3.3. John Hus

3.3.1. Introduction

Following in Wycliffe's footsteps, John Hus of Bohemia preached a doctrine similar to the English heretic. The Hussites were a heretical sect that arose early in the 15th century, generally coinciding with Hus' work as rector of the University of Prague in 1409,¹²⁹ and ending in 1434 with the reconciliation of the Roman Catholic authorities and the leaders of the Hussites in Bohemia.¹³⁰ Primarily existing in Bohemia, the Hussites were Czech-speaking and nationalistic. They drew their initial theological inspiration (and their name) from John Hus, who was, in turn, highly influenced by the reforming ideas promulgated by John Wycliffe in the late 14th century at Oxford.¹³¹ Like all post-Nicene heresies, Hussitism was heavily influenced by its time and place. Drawing on the religious unrest in 15th-century Bohemia, Hus' followers eventually came to be the main protagonists in the battle for Czech independence.¹³² Although they were unable to win their battle for separation from the Catholic Church, the Catholic Church's recognition, through the reconciliation, of the Czech right to practice Utraquism¹³³ and to have the liturgy read in the vernacular shows the power of the beliefs of Hus and his followers.¹³⁴

3.3.2. Roots and History of Hus' Beliefs

Hus was born around 1369 in Bohemia, which was at that time a province of the Holy Roman Empire. He spent his youth preparing for the priesthood, receiving a degree from Charles University in Prague in 1396. Hus became a professor of theology in 1398, was

¹²⁹ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 90-91.

¹³⁰ Fudge, *The Crusade against Heretics in Bohemia, 1418-1437*, 4-5.

¹³¹ Fudge, *The Crusade against Heretics in Bohemia, 1418-1437*, 5.

¹³² Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 88.

¹³³ Full lay participation in the Eucharist, unlike Catholic practice, in which the laity did not take the wine that had become the blood of Christ.

¹³⁴ Schaff, *John Huss: His Life*, 455.

ordained to the priesthood in 1400, was made rector of the University in 1402, and received a bachelor's degree in theology in 1404.¹³⁵ In 1402, Hus became a preacher at the Bethlehem Chapel, a center of the native Bohemian reform movement since its founding in 1391.¹³⁶ Because of this appointment, Hus came into contact with reform ideas and preached in Czech, as opposed to Latin. While a lecturer at the University of Prague, where he taught theology in his native Czech,¹³⁷ Hus became more radicalized. He was influenced by Jerome of Prague, one of John Wycliffe's students at Oxford. Hus drew inspiration for his subsequent reformist ideas from Wycliffe's teachings, specifically his views on the divestment of ecclesiastical wealth, the authority of Scripture, church governance, and the vernacular translation of the Bible.¹³⁸

Hus' other professorial duty as Czech language teacher helped him to create a uniquely Bohemian form of Catholicism, with Czech as the language of the Bible and Utraquism as the form of the Eucharist. Hus taught that his students had a duty to read and understand the Bible on their own, and he advocated for a Czech translation to be made available to the general laity, producing one of his own, copies of which, unfortunately, no longer exist.¹³⁹ To his students, Hus represented the next generation of theological thinkers, one who could converse and relate to his flock in their own language and customs, because he had originally been one of them.¹⁴⁰

Hus' position at the University of Prague allowed him to present his theories to an ever-increasing numbers of students, while at the same time, refining his views in many

¹³⁵ John William Mears, *Heroes of Bohemia: Huss, Jerome, and Zisca* (Philadelphia, PA: Westcott and Thomson, 1879), 31.

¹³⁶ Estep, *Renaissance and Reformation*, 69.

¹³⁷ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 90.

¹³⁸ Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 285-287, 293-295.

¹³⁹ Spinka, *John Hus' Concept of the Church*, 17.

¹⁴⁰ Schaff, *John Huss: His Life*, 55.

published tracts, often written in his native Czech.¹⁴¹ By tapping into the general zeitgeist of Bohemia at the time, he developed a theological system combining Wycliffe's ideals with preexisting Bohemian discontent at papal interference in the Bohemian Church. This system, which ultimately took his name, appealed to many of his countrymen, and Hus' popularity quickly grew within the University and throughout Bohemian society.¹⁴²

Hus' beliefs, however, were not endorsed by all Bohemians, particularly by the Catholic clergy, who owed their allegiance and authority to the Pope. These forces attempted to suppress Hus' heretical teachings.¹⁴³ In 1410, Zbynek, the Archbishop of Prague, burned Wycliffe's works and excommunicated Hus and his supporters. However, by this time, Hus' reformist ideas had spread to the common man, leading the people of Prague, inspired by Hus and his teachings, to rise up against papal authority.¹⁴⁴

For four years, the dispute between nationalist Bohemians and those loyal to the papacy and Emperor Sigmund simmered, exacerbating existing tensions and resulting in numerous small battles between the two sides. In 1412, after his excommunication and exile from Prague, Hus retreated to the countryside until his arrest in 1414. During this time, supported by wealthy patrons, Hus continued to develop his beliefs, publishing his major work, *De ecclesia* (*The Church*), wherein he laid out an ambitious proposal for Church reform in Wycliffe's tradition.¹⁴⁵ *De ecclesia* was viewed as a direct threat by both the Pope and the Emperor. In 1414, Hus was lured to the German city of Constance, where he was arrested, tried, and executed for heresy.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴¹ Schaff, *John Huss: His Life*, 81.

¹⁴² Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 290-292.

¹⁴³ Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 293.

¹⁴⁴ Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 295-296.

¹⁴⁵ Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 294-295.

¹⁴⁶ Spinka, *John Hus, a Biography*, 287-290.

Hus' execution had two significant effects. First, it created a martyr to invigorate the movement to reform the church in Bohemia. For the Hussites, Hus' martyrdom was reminiscent of the early Church martyrs, who had died for their belief in the absolute Truth of Christ's message.¹⁴⁷ Many Bohemian theologians argued that, by mirroring the methods of Roman oppression of the early Church, the papacy knew the truth within the Hussite message, and fearing it like the Romans feared the early Christians, the Catholic Church punished Hus in a similar way.¹⁴⁸ Second, Hus' martyrdom—having occurred in a German city, under the hand of a German emperor, who had used treachery to lure Hus out of the safety of Bohemia—was quickly adopted by other Bohemians as a rallying point for political action.¹⁴⁹ This act of aggression by the German Emperor against a symbol of Czech nationalism inexorably tied the reforming, religious side of the Hussite movement to the side representing Czech nationalism.¹⁵⁰

3.3.3. Hus' Major Works

Hus' works, although less numerous than those of Wycliffe, were more widely read.¹⁵¹ 'Huss issued his polemical writings within the narrow limits of two or three years, beginning with his *Treatise on Indulgences*. In each case the cause was urgent, the feeling intense in Prague and in the writer's own heart. What he wrote, he was obliged to write quickly.'¹⁵² His main works were *Commentary on the Sentences of Peter Lombard* (1407–1408), *Treatise on Indulgences* (1412), and *De Ecclesia* (1413).

¹⁴⁷ Spinka, *John Hus' Concept of the Church*, 298-300.

¹⁴⁸ Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 295-296.

¹⁴⁹ Schaff, *John Huss: His Life*, 455.

¹⁵⁰ Spinka, *John Hus, a Biography*, 75-77.

¹⁵¹ For a discussion on this, see: Section 3.4.2.

¹⁵² Schaff, *John Huss: His Life*, 309.

3.3.3.1. Commentary on the Sentences of Peter Lombard

As Schaff describes:

The *Commentary on the Sentences of Peter Lombard* shows that Huss had a much larger gift for original thought and writing than it has been recently the custom to credit him with. This work has the marks of independent theological discussion and it also evinces Huss's acquaintance with the wide field of theological knowledge. He quotes Wyclif, though not at length. He refers to him once by name, and then to bear witness to his deep regard for his master and give expression to his own merciful view of the judgments of God. . . . Huss had been speaking in the line of hopeful reliance upon God's mercy. First and last, he says: 'I lean more toward hope, trusting the mercy of God, than to despair, looking in the direction of eternal damnation, from which the omnipotent God in mercy deliver us, and we praise God for His most gracious mercy, because even in the hour of death He is so merciful to forgive.'¹⁵³

Huss's *Commentary* is a clear, straightforward and judicious theological treatise, with a strong practical tendency. It is to be regarded as a moderate statement of the theology of the age in which its author lived. He does not depart from the official tenets, yet he modifies them. Certain prurient questions he declines altogether to answer. Such questions he pronounces of little profit, and, as in the case of the condition of the lost, he relegates the solution of many of the problems to the light of the day of judgment. The author places above all scientific knowledge of religion, the law of Christ and the duty of love to one's neighbor which he turns aside again and again to emphasize, as he does also the words, that by their fruits shall men be known.¹⁵⁴

In the *Commentary*, Hus does make clear his position on the subject of priestly absolution.

He says that:

God gave to priests the power of binding and loosing; that is, of showing the men who have been bound and loosed, and that they bind when they impose upon persons who have made confession the satisfaction of penance and they loose when they remit something of that satisfaction, or they bind when they place under excommunication and loose when they release from excommunication.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵³ Schaff, *John Huss: His Life*, 310.

¹⁵⁴ Schaff, *John Huss: His Life*, 311.

¹⁵⁵ Schaff, *John Huss: His Life*, 115.

Hus argues that ‘no one can be excommunicated unless he is first excommunicated by himself and except he offends against Christ’s law.’¹⁵⁶

3.3.3.2. Treatise on Indulgences

Hus’ first true polemic was his *Treatise on Indulgences*, published in 1412. This work was a direct attack on indulgences, in response to papal bulls encouraging the selling of indulgences to finance the crusade against Ladislaus of Naples, a Christian prince.¹⁵⁷ Hus spoke out against both the practice of ‘selling indulgences on the streets of Prague,’¹⁵⁸ as well as the crusade itself, which was being prosecuted against other Christians.¹⁵⁹ This work was not simply an attack on one papal act, but an attack on the entire institution of the papacy.¹⁶⁰ Many of the ideas Hus espoused here were more thoroughly outlined in his major work, *De Ecclesia*.

3.3.3.3. De Ecclesia

Hus’ culminating work was his *De Ecclesia*, published in 1413. As Schaff states, ‘Of Huss’s many polemical works, including his *Treatise on Indulgences*, *Wyclif’s Tract on the Trinity* and *The Answer to the Eight Doctors*, the chief is the *Treatise on the Church—de Ecclesia*.’¹⁶¹ This work outlined Hus’ full theology and social philosophy, and formed the basis of the evidence on which he was condemned.¹⁶² As Loserth shows:

Among all the writings of Hus, that ‘*Of the Church*’ has always been esteemed the most important: friends and foes alike, it has constantly inspired with deep respect. No less a person than Peter d’Ailli declared before the Council of

¹⁵⁶ Hus, ‘Introduction,’ in *Treatise on Indulgences*, xix.

¹⁵⁷ Hus, ‘Introduction,’ in *Treatise on Indulgences*, x.

¹⁵⁸ Hus, ‘Introduction,’ in *Treatise on Indulgences*, x.

¹⁵⁹ Hus, ‘Introduction,’ in *Treatise on Indulgences*, x.

¹⁶⁰ Hus, ‘Introduction,’ in *Treatise on Indulgences*, x.

¹⁶¹ Schaff, *John Huss: His Life*, 305.

¹⁶² 26 of the 39 articles presented against Hus were drawn directly from this work, see: Mears, *Heroes of Bohemia*, 165.

Constance, that this tractate of Hus, by its immense abundance of proofs, combats the authority and plenary power of the Pope, no less than the Koran combats the catholic faith. Even in our own day this tractate is from one standpoint called the 'notorious' one. Since, according to the statement of a Protestant Church historian, the same contains a summary of all his theological views, and particularly those bearing upon Church reformation.¹⁶³

This work was split into two sections, 'part one was concerned with the nature of the Church and Wyclif's definition; part two deals with practical issues.'¹⁶⁴

This work owed much to Wycliffe's work of the same name. Schaff argues:

Wyclif's Treatise on the Church—*de Ecclesia*—Beyond this work, which was written only about thirty years before his own, Huss does not go. Huss's views are Wyclif's views; his Scriptural proofs, as the case necessarily demands, largely Wyclif's proofs. His indebtedness to his English forerunner is evident not only in the movement of his ideas, but in large sections which are copied almost verbally from Wyclif's works.¹⁶⁵

Although it is clear that Hus was an ardent student of Wycliffe's works, it is also clear that he used these works as inspiration to expound a form of worship more in line with his own beliefs shaped by the native Bohemian reform movement.

In the first part of *De Ecclesia*, Hus defines the Church as those who are part of the true church—elected for salvation—and those who are damned.¹⁶⁶ Schaff states Hus, 'not only defined the church as the body of the elect, but seems almost to advocate the evangelical theory recognizing the universal priesthood of believers.'¹⁶⁷ It is in this part that Hus most heavily relies on Wycliffe, as outlined by Lambert,¹⁶⁸ and Schaff.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶³ Loserth, *Wiclif and Hus*, trans. M.J. Evans, 32.

¹⁶⁴ Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 294.

¹⁶⁵ Schaff, *John Huss: His Life*, 306.

¹⁶⁶ Spinka, *John Hus' Concept of the Church*, 213-214.

¹⁶⁷ Schaff, *John Huss: His Life*, 309.

¹⁶⁸ Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*; 294-295.

¹⁶⁹ Schaff, *John Huss: His Life*, xx.

In the second part, Hus presents his views on the nature, composition, and role of the church. Here, Hus expresses his beliefs on the corruption of the clergy,¹⁷⁰ the roles of the laity and clergy in the ‘true’ church,¹⁷¹ the authority of Scripture,¹⁷² and the belief in the apostasy of the Catholic authorities.¹⁷³ It is from this section that many of the charges brought against Hus were culled by the Council of Constance. Because this was Hus’ major theological work, the ideas represented in it will be discussed more thoroughly in the next section.

3.3.4. Hus’ Theology

Like Wycliffe, Hus argued for a return to the primacy of Scripture as the basis for Church organization and life. For Hus, ‘they are the supreme rule of faith and conduct...charged with following Wyclif, he replied that if he accepted Wyclif’s statements, it was because they were drawn from scripture.’¹⁷⁴ To Hus, ‘the holy volume...is a book of life, an animate thing,’ and the only true representation of the word of God’s presence here on Earth, in the form of Jesus Christ.¹⁷⁵ Hus drew his entire system of church structure, governance, practice, and belief from the examples in the Scriptures.

Hus reiterated Wycliffe’s belief of a ‘true’ church made up of those predestined for salvation and those who were *presciti* and incapable of salvation.¹⁷⁶ Through the use of scriptural and philosophical evidence, Hus argued for what constituted the Church. In *De Ecclesia*, Hus states:

¹⁷⁰ Hus, ‘Introduction,’ in *De Ecclesia*, xviii.

¹⁷¹ Hus, ‘Introduction,’ in *De Ecclesia*, xix.

¹⁷² Hus, ‘Introduction,’ in *De Ecclesia*, xxi.

¹⁷³ Hus, ‘Introduction,’ in *De Ecclesia*.

¹⁷⁴ Hus, ‘Introduction,’ in *De Ecclesia*, xxi.

¹⁷⁵ Hus, ‘Introduction,’ in *De Ecclesia*, xxi.

¹⁷⁶ Hus, *De Ecclesia*, 14.

Therefore, in order to reach a proper knowledge of her, it is to be noted, (1) That the church signifies the house of God, constituted for the very purpose that in it the people may worship its God, as it is written, I Cor. 11:22: 'Have ye not houses to eat and to drink in ?' Or, to speak with Augustine: 'Do you despise the church of God, the house of prayer?' (2) The church signifies the ministers belonging to the house of God. Thus the clerics belonging to one material church call themselves the church. But according to the Greeks, a church—*ecclesia*—is a congregation held together under one rule, as Aristotle teaches, *Polit.* 2:7, when he says: 'All have part in the church.' In view of this meaning, therefore, the congregation of all men is called the church—*ecclesia*. This appears in Matt. 25:31-33, which says: 'When the Son of Man shall come in his glory and all his angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory and before him shall be congregated all nations.' What a great congregation of all men under the rule of Christ the king that will be! Because, however, the whole of that congregation is not the holy church it is added, 'and he will separate them, the one from the other, as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.'

From this it is evident that there is one church—*ecclesia*—of the sheep and another of the goats, one church of the righteous and another of the reprobate—*presciti*. Likewise the church of the righteous is on the one hand catholic, that is, universal, which is not a part of anything else. Of this I am now treating. On the other hand, it is particular, a part with other parts, as the Savior said, Matt. 18:20: 'Where two or three are congregated together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.' From this it follows that two righteous persons congregated together in Christ's name constitute, with Christ as the head, a particular holy church, and likewise three or four and so on to the whole number of the predestinate without admixture. . . .

But the holy catholic—that is, universal—church is the totality of the predestinate—*omnium predestinatorum universitas*—or all the predestinate, present, past, and future.¹⁷⁷

Hus' reliance on Scripture informed his position on the role of the clergy and the role of the Pope within the true church.¹⁷⁸ For Hus, 'the priest's main duty was to set forth [the Bible's] truths and, in being true to it, it is not possible to incur damnation through any prelatial command.'¹⁷⁹ These priests must be pure, and for Hus, 'Priestly acts of all kind are invalid except as the priest's life is conformed to Christ's law. No one has ever more clearly laid

¹⁷⁷ Hus, 'Introduction,' in *De Ecclesia*, 1–3.

¹⁷⁸ Hus, *De Ecclesia*, 195.

¹⁷⁹ Hus, 'Introduction,' in *De Ecclesia*, xxi.

stress on the necessity of purity of life to the clerical office than Huss.¹⁸⁰ For Hus, the main downfall of the priesthood was seeking personal glory, stating that ‘every priest who is not seeking his own glory but the honor of God, the prosperity of the church and the salvation of the people, and who does God's will and uncovers the wiles of antichrist, preaching the law of Christ—he has the marks which show that God sent him.’¹⁸¹ Hus believed that ‘the chief power given to the Apostles and their successors was to preach or evangelize,’¹⁸² not to dictate proper conduct or be concerned with the pursuit of worldly power. For Hus, ‘it is clear that the righteous conduct of a priest and his fruitful labor in Christ’s Word show to the people that he is sent from God, because he does the works of the Father. Nor should a man be pope, bishop, priest or deacon unless he be so sent of God.’¹⁸³

Hus also attacked the very nature of the papacy, arguing that, although the Pope may have been given the power to bind and loose here on Earth, his ability to absolve individuals of sins is derived from God and is not caused by his actions.¹⁸⁴ Hus devoted Section X of his *De Ecclesia* to discussing the true form that this power took.¹⁸⁵ For Hus, ‘neither pope nor priest can absolve from sin except where God has before absolved...the pope’s act in absolving is nothing more than the announcement of a *herald—factum papea a masimum non esi misi praconis Dei promulatio.*’¹⁸⁶ To Hus, the papacy had strayed far from the calling, and whereas ‘by tears and prayers and Christian ministries, should the supreme pontiff and priests fulfill their office,’¹⁸⁷ they instead focused on accumulating and maintaining the

¹⁸⁰ Hus, ‘Introduction,’ in *De Ecclesia*, xix.

¹⁸¹ Hus, *De Ecclesia*, 195–196.

¹⁸² Hus, ‘Introduction,’ in *De Ecclesia*, xx.

¹⁸³ Hus, *De Ecclesia*, 196.

¹⁸⁴ Hus, ‘Introduction,’ in *De Ecclesia*, xx.

¹⁸⁵ Hus, ‘Chapter X,’ in *De Ecclesia*, 91–110.

¹⁸⁶ Hus, ‘Introduction,’ in *De Ecclesia*, xix.

¹⁸⁷ Hus, ‘Introduction,’ in *De Ecclesia*, xxi.

power of the church by issuing papal edicts and bulls meant to limit the laity's ability to use Scripture—*preater expressam scripiuram*—to justify their current spiritual journey.¹⁸⁸

In terms of mystical thought, Hus maintained a strong spiritual life, as evidenced by Fudge's work. In *Jan Hus*, Fudge shows that while 'Jan Hus is not generally thought of as a "mystic" in the traditional sense, he shared many of the same concerns as medieval mystics did.'¹⁸⁹ However, as Leff shows, the Hussites overall were not inherently mystical.¹⁹⁰ Hus' insistence on complete observation of Biblical authority would lead one to believe that Hussites were fundamentalist and not mystical. Yet, Hus' belief in the real presence of the Holy Spirit in the true church shows that there was a mystical element to his theology as well.

One important aspect to understand in the formulation of Hus' spiritual beliefs is that of the native Bohemian form of worship.¹⁹¹ Central to this worship was the practice of Utraquism, which is the lay participation in the full practice of the Eucharist, the taking of both the bread and wine, as was done in the earliest days of the Christian Church.¹⁹² By the 15th century, however, the Catholic Church had forbidden the laity from partaking of the wine, or 'Lay Chalice,' for fear of a sacrilegious spill of the Savior's blood after its transubstantiation.¹⁹³ The practice of Utraquism, which began in Bohemia before Hus' teaching, thus represented a major break with contemporary Roman Catholic doctrine, and it greatly influenced the direction of the 'reforming tendencies' that Hus' supporters would take after his death.¹⁹⁴

¹⁸⁸ Hus, 'Introduction,' in *De Ecclesia*, xxii.

¹⁸⁹ Thomas A. Fudge, *Jan Hus: Religious Reform and Social Revolution in Bohemia* (I.B. Tauris, 2010), 75.

¹⁹⁰ Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, 663.

¹⁹¹ Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, 607.

¹⁹² Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 91.

¹⁹³ Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 301-304.

¹⁹⁴ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 94.

Many of the faithful, including in Bohemia, believed that the Catholic Church's interdiction on Utraquism ran directly contrary to Christ's message to partake of both aspects of the Eucharist, body and blood, to achieve salvation.¹⁹⁵ Local Czech priests and bishops supported the practice of Utraquism in the Bohemian Church, seeking to reform the Catholic Church and return to this form of worship as directed by Christ. Utraquism was, as posited by Fudge, 'the single most important, though by no means only, aspect of this reforming movement...the recovery of sacramental piety linked to lay participation in the Eucharist.'¹⁹⁶

3.3.5. Hus' Practice

Many 'Czech theologians insisted social ills and church problems were best solved through an active sacramental participation... [leading to a] renewed emphasis on the sacrament of the altar... [which became] the focus of ecclesiastical doctrine and religious practice in Bohemia.'¹⁹⁷ These theologians viewed the removal of the 'Lay Chalice' from the mass as representing a broader movement by the Church hierarchy away from the true church and as a factor contributing to the social upheavals of the medieval period.¹⁹⁸ For these theologians, papal attempts to stamp out Utraquism were not only disastrous for medieval society but were deliberately hostile to the unique form of Czech worship.¹⁹⁹

An important effect of the practice of Utraquism was a spiritual leveling between the laity and clergy. Unlike the rest of the Catholic world, in Bohemia, 'lay people and religious [were] standing on level ground, together participating in the community of God with humankind.'²⁰⁰ For many Czech theologians, Utraquism emulated the earliest form of

¹⁹⁵ Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 301-304.

¹⁹⁶ Fudge, *The Crusade against Heretics in Bohemia, 1418-1437*, 1.

¹⁹⁷ Fudge, *The Crusade against Heretics in Bohemia, 1418-1437*, 1.

¹⁹⁸ Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 306.

¹⁹⁹ Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 307.

²⁰⁰ Spinka, *John Hus: A Biography*, 98.

Christian worship and was therefore closer to the ‘true’ church than that being led by the Pope. This caused Bohemian theologians to actively support reforms that would return the church to its true form.²⁰¹

To his detractors, Hus was ‘attempting to demonstrate this particular article of faith (Utraquism) in a most colorful and sophisticated fashion with Scriptural texts, with a type of argument appealing to the simple and illiterate.’²⁰² But the Hussites ‘claimed the new communion rite was observed on grounds of divine revelation and who would dare withstand the Holy Ghost?’²⁰³ Much of the impetus for both social and spiritual reform in Bohemia had its roots in this commingling of the laity and the clergy, which, in the rest of the Catholic world, remained two distinct spheres. As Fudge states, ‘this communing created social identity, religious reality and in so doing provided the catalyst for reform. Eventually, the implications of Eucharist renewal produced social and theological revolution’²⁰⁴ that would result in the Hussite movement becoming emblematic of the more widely held Bohemian reformist tendencies.

3.3.6. Political and Social Impact of Hus

During Hus’ lifetime, a new sense of Czech national identity was emerging as the Czech people sought a degree of autonomy from the Holy Roman Empire.²⁰⁵ The local priests and bishops contributed to this newfound nationalism by performing the Bohemian mass in Czech, with Hus’ vernacular translation of the Bible as their source for Scripture.²⁰⁶ They believed, like Wycliffe, that the laity should be able to understand the Scriptures in their

²⁰¹ Spinka, *John Hus, a Biography*, 256-257.

²⁰² Fudge, *The Crusade against Heretics in Bohemia, 1418–1437*, 2.

²⁰³ Fudge, *The Crusade against Heretics in Bohemia, 1418–1437*, 2.

²⁰⁴ Fudge, *The Crusade against Heretics in Bohemia, 1418–1437*, 1.

²⁰⁵ Schaff, *John Huss: His Life*, 22.

²⁰⁶ Schaff, *John Huss: His Life*, 23.

own tongue, a belief that easily fit with this nationalist sentiment.²⁰⁷ As Spinka shows, this development of a national identity caused the Czechs to defend with worldly weapons what they viewed as the true church, their national church, against those who would destroy it, a defense that ultimately withstood the papal forces.²⁰⁸

This meant that Hussitism, from its inception, had a political element as well. The Hussite Wars (which encompassed the Crusade called against them) were as much a fight for Czech independence from the Holy Roman Empire as they were a defense of the faith.²⁰⁹ Bohemian nobles, chafing under the rule of the Emperor, saw in the Hussite movement a opportunity to rebel against the German lords, and ‘as early as 1415 more than 450 Czech barons publicly rose up against the decision of Constance with respect to Jan Huss and the chalice,’²¹⁰ linking their temporal power to this spiritual controversy. These barons were reacting against the power of Emperor, not the Pope, and their motivations were borne of their desire to separate themselves from their overlords more than from any religious conviction.²¹¹ It was not until 1420 that an official Crusade was called against the Hussite cause, with the spiritual backing of the Pope, turning the fight against the Bohemian rebellion into a religious one.²¹² By that time, the political element had been inexorably tied to the spiritual one, so that the battle was also one of national independence.

The Hussite Wars were brutal affairs, with atrocities committed on both sides. Yet no matter how hard the Catholics attacked the Hussite warriors, final victory eluded them. By 1434, with both sides having suffered tremendous losses, a settlement between the Roman

²⁰⁷ Spinka, *John Hus, a Biography*, 76-78.

²⁰⁸ Spinka, *John Hus, a Biography*, 78.

²⁰⁹ Fudge, *The Crusade against Heretics in Bohemia, 1418–1437*, 3–6.

²¹⁰ This introduction of a measure of religious freedom and diversity of practice in medieval Bohemia fostered an atmosphere that would define the Bohemian Reform Movement.

²¹¹ Fudge, *The Crusade against Heretics in Bohemia, 1418–1437*, 3–6.

²¹² Fudge, *The Crusade against Heretics in Bohemia, 1418–1437*, 4-5

Catholic Church and the more moderate Hussite leaders was reached.²¹³ That settlement reconciled the Bohemian Church with Rome, but it entitled the Bohemian Church to a substantial degree of religious self-government, most importantly preserving the right to receive the Lay Chalice and the right to preach in their native Czech.²¹⁴ This introduction of a measure of religious freedom and diversity of practice in medieval Bohemia fostered an atmosphere that would ultimately help to set the stage for the Reformation.²¹⁵

3.3.7. Section Summary

In this section, the history of Hus was examined, specifically his life, the effects of his works on Bohemia, the Papal response to his preaching, and finally his martyrdom at the Council of Constance.²¹⁶ Next, Hus' major works, *Commentary on the Sentences on Peter Lombard* (1407–1408), *Treatise on Indulgences* (1412), and *De Ecclesia* (1413), were examined for what they say about Hus' political and theological philosophies.²¹⁷ This was followed by a discussion of Hus' theology, specifically his argument for the primacy of Scripture, apostasy of the current clergy and the Pope, the need for personal salvation based on scriptural study, return to a primitive church, and his acceptance of Wycliffe's 'visible'/'true' church dichotomy.²¹⁸ This was followed by a discussion of this theology on practice, specifically, Hus' insistence on Utraquism.²¹⁹ The section concluded with a discussion of the political effect of Hus' teachings, focusing on the crusade called against Hussites.²²⁰

²¹³ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 97

²¹⁴ Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 330-332; Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 96-97.

²¹⁵ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 98–99.

²¹⁶ Section 3.3.2.

²¹⁷ Section 3.3.3.

²¹⁸ Section 3.3.4.

²¹⁹ Section 3.3.5.

²²⁰ Section 3.3.6.

3.4. The Connection Between Wycliffe and Hus

The connection between Wycliffe and Hus has been examined by many scholars in various disciplines.²²¹ One commentator states that ‘when the writings of J. Wycliffe became known in Bohemia, Huss was attracted to the political doctrines and sympathetic to his teachings.’²²² There was an influx of Wycliffite texts into Prague during the time of Hus,²²³ and Hus’ own use and translation of Wycliffe’s texts has been demonstrated.²²⁴

Although nearly all scholars agree that there was indeed a connection, the exact nature and extent of this connection is disputed. As discussed in Section 3.5, opinions range from scholars who view the Hussite movement as nothing but Wycliffeism transplanted into Bohemian soil²²⁵ to those who argue that Hus was tapping into a native-born, Bohemian reform movement with little influence from Wycliffe.²²⁶

3.4.1. Historical Background

3.4.1.1. Wycliffite Influence in Bohemia

After the marriage of the Bohemian King Wenceslaus’ sister, Anne, to Richard II of England in 1382, the writings of Wycliffe became known in Bohemia. Anne’s presence in England induced students from the University of Prague to study at Oxford, where they were influenced by Wycliffe’s writings.²²⁷ Schaff shows this influence:

in Anne’s reign Wyclif’s writings were carried to Prague, where they were studied in the university. This is clear from Huss's own testimony. He wrote

²²¹ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 88-90; Spinka, *John Hus, a Biography*, 59, 65, 69, 112-113, 158-159; Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 282, 290, 293-295.

²²² Livingston, *The Oxford Concise Dictionary of the Christian Church*, 279.

²²³ Poole, *Wycliffe and Movements for Reform*, 152; Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 281-283.

²²⁴ Schaff, Chapter 3, ‘Huss’ Debt to Wycliffe,’ in *John Huss: His Life*, 43–58; Poole, *Wycliffe and Movements for Reform*, 124.

²²⁵ Poole, *Wycliffe and Movements for Reform*, 119; Schaff, *John Huss: His Life*, 43–58.

²²⁶ Spinka, *John Hus: A Biography*, 74.

²²⁷ See: Matthew Spinka, ‘Paul Kravar and the Lollard–Hussite Relations,’ cited in Fudge, *The Magnificent Ride*, 45, n. 205.; Schaff, *John Huss: His Life*, 46.

to the English Carmelite, John Stokes, in 1411, that Prague had possessed and been reading Wyclif's works for twenty years and more.²²⁸

Jerome of Prague, one of Wycliffe's greatest supporters and most devoted friends in Bohemia, is frequently credited with disseminating Wycliffe's ideas in Bohemia.²²⁹ Jerome was born in Prague around 1379.²³⁰ His family was well-to-do, and, after taking his bachelor's degree at the University of Prague in 1398, he secured permission to travel in 1399.²³¹ In 1401, he returned to Prague, but in 1402 he visited England and, at Oxford, copied out the *Dialogus* and *Trialogus* of Wycliffe.²³² Jerome also became an ardent and outspoken advocate of realism,²³³ and he was thereafter ostracized by charges of Wycliffeism and realism.²³⁴ In 1407, Jerome returned to Oxford, but was again compelled to flee. During 1408 and 1409, he took a position at the University of Prague,²³⁵ where he soon attracted attention for his advanced and outspoken opinions.

Jerome was soon on friendly terms with Hus and took part in the controversies then swirling through the university.²³⁶ In January 1410, he made a cautious speech before the university in favor of Wycliffe's philosophical views,²³⁷ and this was cited against him at the

²²⁸ Schaff, *John Huss: His Life*, 46.

²²⁹ Estep, *Renaissance and Reformation*, 69.

²³⁰ Estep, *Renaissance and Reformation*, 69.

²³¹ Estep, *Renaissance and Reformation*, 70.

²³² 'On his trial at Constance Jerome deposed that he had copied Wyclif's *Dialogus* and *Trialogus* and carried them to Prague.' Schaff, *John Huss: His Life*, 47.

²³³ In medieval philosophy, realism is contrasted with 'conceptualism' and 'nominalism.' The opposition of realism and nominalism developed out of debates over universals. 'Universals' are terms or properties that can be applied to many things, rather than denoting a single specific individual—for example, red, beauty, five, or dog, as opposed to Socrates or Athens. Realism in this context holds that universals exist, independently and somehow prior to the world; this is associated with Plato. Conceptualism holds that they exist, but only in the mind. Moderate Realism holds that they exist, but only insofar as they are instantiated in specific things; they do not exist *separately* from the specific thing. Nominalism holds that universals do not 'exist' at all; they are no more than words we use to describe specific objects, they do not name anything. This particular dispute over realism is largely moot in contemporary philosophy and has been for centuries. Estep, *Renaissance and Reformation*, 68.

²³⁴ Estep, *Renaissance and Reformation*, 68-70.

²³⁵ Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, 622, 629.

²³⁶ Hus, 'Introduction,' in *De Ecclesia*, xxiv.

²³⁷ Hus, 'Introduction,' in *De Ecclesia*, xxv.

Council of Constance four years later.²³⁸ In March 1410, the papal bull against Wycliffe's writings was issued. On the charge of favoring them, Jerome was imprisoned in Vienna, but managed to escape to Moravia. For this, he was excommunicated by the Bishop of Cracow. Returning to Prague in 1411, Jerome quickly fell in with Hus again, preaching against the excesses of the Church authorities.²³⁹

As a student in Prague at the turn of the 15th century, Hus became attracted to the imported writings of Wycliffe, which had been brought over in 1401 or 1402 by Jerome. With Jerome's first-hand translations of Wycliffe's *Dialogus* and *Trialogus* in hand,²⁴⁰ Hus began to preach against the Church authorities. His inclination toward ecclesiastical reforms was awakened by the acquaintance with Wycliffe's theological writings, which spread widely in Bohemia.²⁴¹ As stated above, Hus came to prominence at a time of political upheaval in Bohemia, which was controlled by foreign secular and ecclesiastical authorities.²⁴² The faculty at the University of Prague was split into various national groups, with the native Bohemian population supporting the reform movements, whereas the non-native, mainly German, faculty members supported more orthodox interpretations of theological and social issues.²⁴³ Some members of Prague University's faculty, particularly those from outside Bohemia, arose against the spread of the new doctrines, and in 1403, prohibited a disputation on 45 theses authored by Wycliffe.²⁴⁴

²³⁸ Hus, 'Introduction,' in *De Ecclesia*, xxvi.

²³⁹ Hus, 'Introduction,' in *De Ecclesia*, xxvi.

²⁴⁰ Schaff, *John Huss: His Life*, 47.

²⁴¹ Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 285-287.

²⁴² Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, 607-612.

²⁴³ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 90.

²⁴⁴ Spinka, *John Hus, a Biography*, 76-78.

Hus enjoyed significant public support, partially because Bohemia had a native reforming movement,²⁴⁵ which Hus had come to represent, and which had been embraced by a large segment of the nobility.²⁴⁶ Because of his acceptance of Wycliffe's views on the role of the secular authorities with respect to the clergy—holding, for instance, that the secular authorities could confiscate property from those clergy who were in sin—Hus enjoyed the favor of the court.²⁴⁷ Starting as early as 1384, the doctrinal views of Wycliffe were spread over the whole country by Hus' followers, who traveled from village to village, preaching in support of their reforming plans. Zybnek, the Archbishop, brought his complaints before the papal see, accusing the Wycliffites as the instigators of all ecclesiastical disturbances in Bohemia.²⁴⁸

Eventually, the Pope issued his bull of December 20, 1409, which empowered the Archbishop to proceed against Wycliffeism in Bohemia. All books of Wycliffe were to be given up, his doctrines revoked, and free preaching discontinued.²⁴⁹ After the publication of the bull in 1410, Hus' supporters appealed to the Pope, arguing for Hus to send a representative to Rome to defend him.²⁵⁰ This, however, was rejected by the Pope, who continued to press for his bull to be enforced. Hus and his adherents were put under the ban of excommunication, and the town of Prague was put on 'Interdict.'²⁵¹ The resulting suffering caused Hus to leave Prague to lift the Interdict. His departure did not remove his

²⁴⁵ Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, 607.

²⁴⁶ Schaff, *John Huss: His Life*, 87.

²⁴⁷ Schaff, *John Huss: His Life*, 87.

²⁴⁸ Poole, *Wycliffe and Movements for Reform*, 153–154; Spinka, *John Hus, a Biography*, 111–112, 115–116.

²⁴⁹ Schaff, *John Huss: His Life*, 87.

²⁵⁰ Schaff, *John Huss: His Life*, 88.

²⁵¹ The excommunication meant that Hus was technically unable to perform his priestly duties, whereas the 'Interdict' meant that all churches were closed and priests were forbidden to perform any of their duties, including marriages and funeral services. Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, 639.

excommunication, however, and Hus sought other means of redress.²⁵² However, the ideas of Wycliffe had too firmly taken root in much of Bohemia to be wiped out with the actions of the papal authorities, causing a compromise between Hus and Rome to become impossible.²⁵³

At the Council of Constance late in 1414, having initially been granted safe passage, Hus was tried for his views. During his trial, Hus refused to disavow Wycliffe and his teachings, thereby facilitating the Church authorities' condemnation of him on July 6, 1415.²⁵⁴ The Bishop of Lodi delivered an oration on the duty of eradicating heresy, and then some theses of Hus and Wycliffe and a report of Hus' trial were read. Hus protested loudly several times, and when his appeal to Christ was rejected as a condemnable heresy, he exclaimed, 'O God and Lord, now the council condemns even thine own act and thine own law as heresy, since thou thyself didst lay thy cause before thy Father as the just judge, as an example for us, whenever we are sorely oppressed.'²⁵⁵ In a final act of damnation, Hus' fire was built with Wycliffe's manuscript Bibles used as kindling.²⁵⁶ Hus' friend Jerome was burned at the stake at Constance on May 30, 1416.²⁵⁷

3.4.1.2. Non-Wycliffite Influences on Hus

Mathis of Janow was a popular Bohemian reformer in the 1370s.²⁵⁸ He argued for full lay participation in the Eucharist, apostolic poverty, and preaching in Czech to the masses.²⁵⁹ Lambert shows that:

in part two of Hus' *De ecclesia*, we find he is ceasing to follow Wyclif: more at home in discussion of the practical issues confronting the Church, he veers

²⁵² Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, 639.

²⁵³ Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, 640.

²⁵⁴ Estep, *Renaissance and Reformation*, 76.

²⁵⁵ Poole, *Wycliffe and Movements for Reform*, 67.

²⁵⁶ Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, 652-656.

²⁵⁷ Estep, *Renaissance and Reformation*, 76.

²⁵⁸ Loserth, *Wiclif and Hus*, 45-51.

²⁵⁹ Loserth, *Wiclif and Hus*, 49-50.

towards the older and orthodox tradition in Matthias of Janov, of a distinction within the Church between the communion of the elect and the body of the faithful...the turning back to Matthias is characteristic: it shows Hus in the last resort more the heir of the earlier Czech reformers than of the Wyclif he so venerated.²⁶⁰

Another influence on Hus not related to Wycliffe resulted from Hus' installation as preacher at the Church of Bethlehem in 1402.²⁶¹ This radical church was founded in 1394²⁶² by followers of Bohemian political-religious reformer Jan Milic,²⁶³ who preached biblical authority and spoke against the abuses of the church authorities.²⁶⁴ Milic believed in apostolic poverty and biblical authority. He came to believe that the Pope had become the Antichrist, eventually being summoned to Avignon to answer for his preaching.²⁶⁵ Milic's views penetrated to the larger mass of Bohemian clergy, helping to shape the native reform movement from which some of Hus' teachings would emerge.²⁶⁶

The preachers of the Church of Bethlehem practiced a more radical form of worship, using biblical authority to preach against the practices of Rome in the Czech tongue.²⁶⁷ When Hus was installed, he was given the freedom to pursue his own personal interpretation of the Bible and to preach in a language the laity could readily understand. As Mears discusses:

²⁶⁰ Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 294.

²⁶¹ 'This structure was reared at the time when private citizens were vying with the emperor Charles IV, in efforts to beautify and extend the city of Prague. It was entirely a work of private beneficence. But the object of the two men of Prague to whom its erection was due, was far beyond merely adding to the adornments of the city. They wished to provide a place, such as did not then exist in the city, especially suited for preaching the word of God in the language of the people. The immense encumbrance of popish rites and ceremonies in the Latin tongue left no sufficient opportunity in the places of worship for preaching the gospel. Preachers in the Bohemian tongue especially were forced to go from house to house, and even to seek out secret places for performing their service.' Mears, *Heroes of Bohemia*, 31–32.

²⁶² Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 280.

²⁶³ For more on Milic and his influence on Hus, see: Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, 610–613.

²⁶⁴ Mears, *Heroes of Bohemia*, 33.

²⁶⁵ Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 277.

²⁶⁶ Schaff, *John Huss: His Life*, 43.

²⁶⁷ Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 280.

The sermons were upon such stirring texts as: ‘Ye are the salt of the earth’; ‘Let us cast off the works of darkness’; ‘Quench not the Spirit’; ‘Go out and compel them to come in.’ On these and the like passages he based the most searching exposures of priestly vice, and the most powerful invectives against the prevailing corruptions of the Church.²⁶⁸

This freedom pointed Hus toward a theology based solely on scriptural authority, helping to mold his own thinking and preparing him to accept Wycliffe’s ideas when they arrived in Bohemia. The Church of Bethlehem also gave Hus a platform outside of the University to spread these beliefs.²⁶⁹ In following Wycliffe, Hus consistently elevated the Bible over church tradition and viewed it as the only binding guide and principle in life. However, Wycliffe’s teachings were only accepted when Hus found them in agreement with Scripture.²⁷⁰

Hus directly credits Wycliffe, calling him ‘master of deep thoughts.’²⁷¹ As Leff shows, ‘Hus...followed in the steps of two generations of Czech reformers,’²⁷² and his success stemmed from his ability to blend their legacy with Wycliffe’s teachings to form a national movement which challenged papal authority.

3.4.2. Specific Differences Between Wycliffe and Hus

Hus did not follow Wycliffe’s views on the Eucharist and transubstantiation. For Wycliffe, these acts were accouterments of the papacy, not biblically evidenced, and therefore unnecessary for salvation.²⁷³ For Hus, the Eucharist and transubstantiation were integral parts of his belief structure, and he argued for Utraquism.²⁷⁴ As Estep states:

²⁶⁸ Mears, *Heroes of Bohemia*, 33.

²⁶⁹ Mears, *Heroes of Bohemia*, 33.

²⁷⁰ Estep, *Renaissance and Reformation*, 73.

²⁷¹ Schaff, *John Huss: His Life*, 43.

²⁷² Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, 607.

²⁷³ As described above in Chapter 3, Section 3.2.4.

²⁷⁴ As described above in Chapter 3, Section 3.2.4. See: also Matthew Spinka, *John Hus’ Concept of the Church* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1966).

Huss steadfastly refused to subscribe to Wycliffe's doctrine of remittance, even this divergence from Wycliffe help show how Huss was affected by the native Bohemian reforming tendencies, as the Eucharist was an important part of Bohemian worship.²⁷⁵

Malcolm Lambert points out another distinction between Hus and Wycliffe, namely the need for a defined priesthood:

In Wyclif's writings his concept of the Church, with its vital distinction between the *presciti*, foreknown to damnation, and the elect, logically led him to a denial of the orthodox belief on the priesthood: no-one who was of the ranks of *presciti* could be a true priest. In practice, priesthood in Wyclif's late writings has no obvious place...[Hus] veers towards the older and orthodox tradition in Matthias of Janoc, of a distinction within the Church between the communion of the elect and the body of the faithful. The priesthood remains at the cost of logic.²⁷⁶

Both Hus and Wycliffe saw the clergy as having been corrupted, but whereas Wycliffe would have the entire laity elevated to the level of the clergy, thus eliminating the need for clergy, Hus sought to break down the barriers between the clergy and the laity so they were standing on equal spiritual footing.²⁷⁷ A subtle, yet important distinction, as it forms the foundation upon which they sought to build their true church. For Lambert, 'the turning back to Matthias is characteristic: it shows Hus in the last resort more the heir of the earlier Czech reformers than of the Wyclif he so venerated.'²⁷⁸

Another point of departure from Wycliffe's teachings was Hus' view of the apostasy of the papacy. As Estep shows, 'neither did he reject the papal office altogether, even though he did say that the Pope could become the Antichrist in instances in which failure of faith or conduct reached an unacceptable level.'²⁷⁹ Although Hus agreed with Wycliffe that the Pope

²⁷⁵ Estep, *Renaissance and Reformation*, 76.

²⁷⁶ Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 294.

²⁷⁷ Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 284-285. See: also Section 3.3.6.

²⁷⁸ Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 294.

²⁷⁹ Estep, *Renaissance and Reformation*, 73.

in his day had failed in his duties, thus freeing the individual from papal authority, Hus did not go as far as Wycliffe in the complete rejection of the entire office of the Pope.

Hus also differed from Wycliffe in his style of writing. Although this distinction does not deal directly with theological positions, it is important in that it affected the impact of these writings. Wycliffe's works tended to be long-winded, full of meandering sidetracks, and written in Latin.²⁸⁰ This restricted his works (not his ideas) mainly to the educated university community.²⁸¹ Hus' works tended to be shorter and more to the point, written in Czech, with the result that they penetrated to the larger masses.²⁸² As Schaff shows:

[I]t must be said that Huss was no servile imitator nor did he seek to play a part in the garments of another. His soul burned with passion for the truths which he defended. Moreover, his treatises have a character of their own. They are more direct and practical than Wyclif's and better adapted to reach the ear of the average man, and move him. . . . Both are Scriptural, but Huss the more Scriptural, arguing from the standpoint of an experimental knowledge of the Scriptures as well as from their letter. Wyclif has the sharpness of the polemic, Huss the persuasion of the advocate.²⁸³

Their relative accessibility meant that the works of Hus were printed fairly quickly after his death, whereas Wycliffe's works were left to gather dust. As Schaff observes:

whereas Wyclif's treatise was not published until 1886, Huss's work was printed in 1520, at Wittenberg, and its teachings known to Luther. Through Huss's memory the question of the church was kept prominent before Europe. At the close of the fifteenth century Wessel, the Holland Reformer, exclaimed: 'The church cannot err; but what is the church? It is the communion of the saints, to which all true believers belong, who are bound together by one faith, one love, one hope.' The nature and prerogatives of the church constituted a fundamental question which was awaiting settlement.²⁸⁴

Thus, it is Hus, not Wycliffe, who is credited for promoting these ideas to the reformers such as Luther, Calvin, and Zwingli.

²⁸⁰ Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 229-230.

²⁸¹ Schaff, *John Huss: His Life*, 307-308.

²⁸² Schaff, *John Huss: His Life*, 307.

²⁸³ Schaff, *John Huss: His Life*, 307.

²⁸⁴ Schaff, *John Huss: His Life*, 307.

3.4.3. Section Summary

This section described Wycliffe's influence in Bohemia, including Anne's marriage to Richard II of England in 1382, Jerome of Prague and his importing of translations of Wycliffe's works to Bohemia, the banning and burning of Wycliffe's works in Bohemia, and the use of Wycliffe's works to condemn Hus at the Council of Constance.²⁸⁵ Also, the section considered the pre-Wycliffite influences of Hus, including Mathis of Janow and Hus' installation as preacher at the Church of Bethlehem in 1402.²⁸⁶

Next, the differences between Hus and Wycliffe were explained, focusing on the Eucharist and transubstantiation, the need for a defined priesthood, the apostasy of the papacy, and the different styles of writing between Hus and Wycliffe.²⁸⁷ This discussion shows that, although Hus was clearly indebted to Wycliffe, he was not a strict follower of all of Wycliffe's views.

3.5. Differing Theories on the Wycliffe–Hus Connection

Scholars examining the connection between Wycliffe and Hus fall primarily into two groups: 1) scholars of Hus and the Hussites and 2) scholars of heresy in general who compare the two sects. Each group's views are examined below.

3.5.1. Hussite Scholarship

Loserth is often cited as laying the foundation for the modern understanding of Wycliffe's influence on Hus.²⁸⁸ He argued that Hus owed a significant debt to Wycliffe and his writings, tracing the penetration of Wycliffe's ideas into Bohemia. In the same vein as Loserth is Poole, who continues to track how Wycliffe's ideas penetrated into Bohemia

²⁸⁵ Chapter 3, Section 3.4.1.1.

²⁸⁶ Chapter 3, Section 3.4.1.2.

²⁸⁷ See: Chapter 3, Section 3.4.2.

²⁸⁸ See: Schaff, *John Huss: His Life*, 15;

through the cross-institutional interaction of the Universities of Prague and Oxford.²⁸⁹ Schaff argues that the Wycliffe–Hus connection was mainly one-directional, with Hus expounding on Wycliffe’s works slightly, but mainly holding to his beliefs.²⁹⁰ Odlozilik argues that Hus, although certainly using Wycliffe extensively, was also tapping into a native Bohemian reformation movement, which helps contribute to the differences that can be found between the two.²⁹¹ Spinka, a Czech historian, argues more forcefully for a distinction to be made between Wycliffe and Hus, citing previous Bohemian reforming tendencies as well as influences other than Wycliffe.²⁹² Fudge stands on the opposite end of the spectrum from Loserth, arguing that Wycliffe’s influence on Hus was minimal. For Fudge, ‘Jan Hus and the Hussite movement were...the climax of long and significant native Czech reform tradition.’²⁹³ Fudge argues that, although there are many similarities between Wycliffe’s... and Hus’ work, Hus came to his conclusions on his own.²⁹⁴

The first serious work on the connection between Wycliffe and Hus was done by Loserth in the late 19th century. In 1875, as a professor to the newly founded University of Czernowitz in Bukowina, Loserth began to investigate the relationship between Wycliffe’s works and Hus’ reforms.²⁹⁵ As a result, he published the first edition of *Hus und Wiclif*, which argues for the complete dependence of Hussite doctrines on Wycliffe’s writings.²⁹⁶

²⁸⁹ Poole, *Wycliffe and Movements for Reform* 152.

²⁹⁰ Schaff, *John Huss: His Life* 15.

²⁹¹ Otakar Odlozilik, ‘Wycliffe’s Influence upon Central and Eastern Europe,’ in *The Slavonic and East European Review*, vol. 7, no. 21 (1929): 634–648;

²⁹² Spinka, *John Hus: A Biography*, 36.

²⁹³ Fudge, *The Magnificent Ride*, 47.

²⁹⁴ Fudge, *The Magnificent Ride*, 46.

²⁹⁵ Hus, ‘Introduction,’ in *De Ecclesia*, xxvi.

²⁹⁶ Loserth, *Wiclif and Hus*, xviii. An English translation by M.J. Evans was produced in 1884, bringing Loserth’s research to an English audience, allowing for more investigation into the Lollard–Hussite connection by English-speaking scholars.

These studies brought Loserth into contact with the Wycliffe Society, which led to the publication of Wycliffe's Latin works in 1883.

Loserth goes to great lengths to show Hus' indebtedness to Wycliffe, giving no credit to the preexisting reform movement in Bohemia:

That which Hus has deposited in the way of theological knowledge, in his various Latin tractates, he owes almost exclusively to the Englishman from whose writings he has, by diligent study, derived it... During the last years of his life, Hus in reality appears as a genuine Wiclifite; with such verbal fidelity, and not seldom with so much *naiveté*, has he copied the writings of the Englishman. It was Wiclif's doctrine principally for which he yielded up his life; and did we not know that he played a part in other than purely theological matters, we should be obliged to confess that he mounted the pile on that 6th July of the year 1415 as an out-and-out Lollard.²⁹⁷

Loserth shows passages in Hus' tracts that Hus copied word for word from Wycliffe, particularly in *De Ecclesia*.²⁹⁸ For Loserth, the fact the Hus' works were printed first was the primary reason Wycliffe's role had been initially underestimated.²⁹⁹

Following Loserth's research, Poole explored the various Wycliffite tracts that may have arrived in Prague, and their effect on Hus' thinking. Poole acknowledges the work of Loserth and then examines the paths that Wycliffe's ideas took to get to Prague.³⁰⁰ These included Bohemians who had studied in Oxford, such as Jerome of Prague,³⁰¹ George of Knyehnicz,³⁰² and Nicolaus Faulfisch.³⁰³ Poole agrees with Loserth that Hus drew much of his initial inspiration from Wycliffe; however, he is more concerned with the mechanism for

²⁹⁷ Loserth, *Wiclif and Hus*, xvi.

²⁹⁸ Loserth, *Wiclif and Hus*, xvii.

²⁹⁹ Loserth, *Wiclif and Hus*, xvii.

³⁰⁰ Poole, 'On the Intercourse between English and Bohemian Wycliffites in the Early Years of the Fifteenth Century,' *The English Historical Review* 7 (1892), 306–311.

³⁰¹ Poole, 'On the Intercourse,' 307.

³⁰² Poole, 'On the Intercourse,' 308.

³⁰³ Poole, 'On the Intercourse,' 308.

their transmission then with their direct effects. Eventually, Loserth and Poole worked together to publish works on Wycliffe and Hus.³⁰⁴

Schaff also places less emphasis on the role a native reforming movement had on Hus,³⁰⁵ with one reviewer noting that ‘while Schaff recognizes the position of Huss as a national leader, the general course of history is handled rather as background than as a breeding-ground of the reformers significances.’³⁰⁶ Another reviewer outlines Schaff’s argument that Hus was:

A competent but not distinguished scholar, a preacher drawing men to him by direct appeal to the simple and straightforward understating of common folk, a theologian of no marked originality, but with a consistence and a persistence which his opponents felt as obstinacy...³⁰⁷

Emerton also notes how, in terms of Loserth and Poole’s views on Hus’ debt to Wycliffe:

Dr. Schaff is inclined to go a little farther than we can follow him in accepting this view. He draws a rather sharp line between Huss’s moral teaching, which he thinks was his Bohemian heritage, and his constructive thought, which he ascribes mainly to Wycliffe.³⁰⁸

Schaff views the Wycliffe–Hus connection as mainly a one-way street, with Hus being deeply indebted to Wycliffe for his ‘constructive thought’

As important as the influence of Paul upon the mind of Luther and more important than the influence of Calvin upon John Knox, were the influence of Wyclif upon the opinions and the career of Huss. Wyclif was the original and bolder mind—the pathfinder. Huss came after, was receptive, but, as it proved, made a deeper impression upon his people.³⁰⁹

³⁰⁴ Eventually, Loserth and Poole worked together to publish works on Wycliffe and Hus, such as *Wyclif’s Latin Works* for the Wyclif Society in 1900.

³⁰⁵ Schaff, *John Huss: His Life*, 73..

³⁰⁶ Reviewed works: Schaff, *John Huss: His Life*. Source: *The Biblical World*, Vol. 49, No. 3 (1917): 184–185, Published by University of Chicago Press, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3135739>. [accessed Jan. 23, 2012]

³⁰⁷ Author: Emerton Ephraim, Reviewed work: Schaff, *John Huss: His Life*. Source: *The Harvard Theological Review*, Vol. 11, No. 2 (1918): 210–211; Published by Cambridge University Press on behalf of the Harvard Divinity School, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1507123>. [accessed Jan. 23, 2012]

³⁰⁸ Ephraim, review of Schaff, *John Huss: His Life*.

³⁰⁹ Schaff, *John Huss: His Life*, 44.

Another early examination into the connection between Wycliffe and Hus is Odlozilik's 'Wycliffe's Influence upon Central and Eastern Europe.'³¹⁰ Odlozilik examines the connections between Wycliffe's Oxford and the University of Prague and, from there, how Wycliffe's ideas spread in Central and Eastern Europe. He argues that the connections between Oxford and Prague trace to at least the mid-14th century, when Professor Vojtech Ranku z Jezova of Prague left Paris to go to Oxford.³¹¹

Odlozilik argues that, although Hus was certainly influenced by Wycliffe, the movement Hus founded was distinct from that of Wycliffe because of what had preceded Hus in Bohemia:

Wycliffe's works penetrated also into other countries, but they nowhere found so much favor as at the University of Prague, and nowhere did they exert such a great influence as in Bohemia. One is naturally led to look for reasons for these events; the only satisfactory explanation is to be found in the reform movement which began to develop in the second half of the 14th century and brought a new ferment into the nation.³¹²

Odlozilik argues for a balance between Spinka (discussed below) and Loserth, Poole, and Schaff. For Odlozilik, the Hussite movement was influenced by Wycliffe, but it developed a unique flavor once those influences came to Prague.

Spinka has documented the connection between Wycliffe and Hus in several of his works.³¹³ Spinka differs from Loserth, Poole, and Schaff in arguing that Hus was the inheritor of a 'native reform program,' underway prior to his coming to the University of Prague.³¹⁴ Spinka argues that Hus and the Hussite movement represented a form of Czech

³¹⁰ Odlozilik, 'Wycliffe's Influence upon Central and Eastern Europe,' 634–648.

³¹¹ Odlozilik, 'Wycliffe's Influence upon Central and Eastern Europe,' 635. Upon his death, Ranku z Jezova established a scholarship for two Czech students to travel to Oxford to study. Odlozilik, 'Wycliffe's Influence upon Central and Eastern Europe,' 635.

³¹² Odlozilik, 'Wycliffe's Influence upon Central and Eastern Europe,' 636.

³¹³ These include Spinka, *John Hus' Concept of the Church*; Matthew Spinka, *John Hus at the Council of Constance* (New York, NY: Columbia Press, 1965); and Spinka, *John Hus: A Biography*.

³¹⁴ Spinka, *John Hus: A Biography*, 14.

‘proto-nationalism,’ which, in turn, was represented by the native reforming tendencies.³¹⁵ He ties Hus to earlier Czech reforms, such as Matthis of Janov.³¹⁶ He also argues that these reforming tendencies were part of the reason Wycliffe’s ideas were able to spread throughout the rest of Bohemia,³¹⁷ along with impetus provided by the marriage of Anne to Richard II, discussed above.

Spinka outlines the connections between England and Scotland, on one hand, and Prague, on the other. He acknowledges the traditional avenues, starting with Vojtech Ranku z Jezova in Paris in 1355.³¹⁸ He then outlines Anne’s relationship to the Wycliffe–Hus connection,³¹⁹ as well as the role of Jerome of Prague, who, Spinka says, ‘returned from Oxford in 1401 and influenced Hus by his fervent Wycliffeism.’³²⁰ He also discusses how Nicholas Faulfisch and George of Kninice ‘visited the Lollard centers, such as Kemerton near Tewksbury in Gloucestershire and Braybrook in Northamptonshire. There they copied many of Wycliffe’s works which were apparently no longer available in Oxford, and upon their return to Bohemia brought them along.’³²¹

Spinka also examines the works of Richard Wyche, who, he says, sent Hus copies of Wycliffe’s works to replace those burned in 1409, as well as Oldcastle’s letters to the Hussites.³²² However, Spinka goes beyond the traditional sources identified by Loserth, Poole, and Schaff to include others, such as Peter Payne, who was tried with fellow Lollard Oldcastle and fled to a group of Waldensians in Germany in 1413 and then to Prague, where

³¹⁵ Spinka, *John Hus’ Concept of the Church*, 55.

³¹⁶ Spinka, Matthew. Paul Kravar and the Lollard–Hussite Relations. *Church History* 25, No. 1 (Mar., 1956), 12–26.

³¹⁷ Spinka, ‘Paul Kravar and the Lollard–Hussite Relations,’ 16.

³¹⁸ Spinka, ‘Paul Kravar and the Lollard–Hussite Relations,’ 16.

³¹⁹ Spinka, ‘Paul Kravar and the Lollard–Hussite Relations,’ 16.

³²⁰ Spinka, ‘Paul Kravar and the Lollard–Hussite Relations,’ 16.

³²¹ Spinka, ‘Paul Kravar and the Lollard–Hussite Relations,’ 16.

³²² Spinka, ‘Paul Kravar and the Lollard–Hussite Relations,’ 17.

he became a teacher of Latin, as well as of Wycliffe's teachings.³²³ Spinka discusses one 'Paul Kravar,' a Czech-born scholar who traveled to Paris to receive a medical degree in 1415. Kravar then returned to Prague, where he began teaching. At some point during this time, he became an outspoken proponent of Hus' ideas, writing in support of his cause.³²⁴ Spinka then examines works believed to be by Kravar, searching for the influences of Wycliffe and of other, earlier Bohemian reform movements.³²⁵

Ultimately, Spinka founded a branch of Hussite scholarship that focused on the 'proto-nationalist' factors, giving credit to Wycliffe for helping to inspire Hus and put into words what Hus was already starting to experience through life in 14th-century Bohemia. Authors such as Kaminsky, like Spinka, argue for a Hussite movement that owed a debt to Wycliffe, but that was a uniquely Bohemian version.³²⁶

Fudge provides another view of the Wycliffe–Hus relationship, arguing that the Hussites should not be considered a forerunner to the subsequent Protestant reformation, but rather, 'The First Reformation.'³²⁷ Fudge argues, directly against Loserth, that Hussitism was a uniquely Bohemian movement.³²⁸ He contends that it was a movement distinct from those that came before, such as Waldensians and Lollards, and those that came after during the Protestant Reformation.³²⁹ To Fudge, Hus and his followers had their own refined theology and set of myths that 'redefined the social and religious structures of many communities and attempted experiments of revolutionary of lasting consequence.'³³⁰ Fudge states that 'Jan Hus and the Hussite movement were the climax of long and significant native

³²³ Spinka, 'Paul Kravar and the Lollard–Hussite Relations,' 17.

³²⁴ Spinka, 'Paul Kravar and the Lollard–Hussite Relations,' 17–18.

³²⁵ Spinka, 'Paul Kravar and the Lollard–Hussite Relations,' 18–19.

³²⁶ Kaminsky, *History of the Hussite Revolution*, 15.

³²⁷ Fudge, *The Magnificent Ride*, 14–15.

³²⁸ Fudge, *The Magnificent Ride*, 53.

³²⁹ Fudge, *The Magnificent Ride*, 16.

³³⁰ Fudge, *The Magnificent Ride*, 1.

Czech reform tradition,³³¹ which had ‘prompted a variety of popular and official trends toward *renovatio* and *reformati*.’³³² It was in this atmosphere that Hus found a willing audience for his message. Fudge argues the Wycliffe’s works were a more clearly delineated version of what Hus had come to on his own, thus going the furthest in separating Wycliffe from Hus.

This view is also espoused by Rashdall, who states:

unfounded is the theory which traces the Bohemian movement to Waldensian, or (as far as the early part of the movement is concerned) to Wycliffite influence. Like all truly great religious revivals, it was of indigenous growth. It began before the rise of Wycliffeism in England; and, like the movement which is connected with the name of the Oxford doctor, it was only one part of a many-sided outburst of national vitality. The latter half of the fourteenth century was characterized both in England and in Bohemia, not only by a most remarkable religious revival, but by great social and political improvement, by great; scholastic activity, and by a vigorous growth of vernacular literature.³³³

3.5.2. Comparative Heretical Studies

The Wycliffe–Hus connection is also explored by scholars conducting comparative heretical studies, both in works dealing with Western European history (Tierney and Painter³³⁴), and in those dealing specifically with heresy (Russell³³⁵ and Ozment³³⁶). For the first group, the focus is on how the Wycliffe–Hus connection affected and was affected by the Church authorities and by society as a whole. The second group’s focus is on the place occupied by Wycliffe and Hus and their followers in the larger scheme of heretical movements of the medieval period. These authors are concerned primarily with the

³³¹ Fudge, *The Magnificent Ride*, 47.

³³² Fudge, *The Magnificent Ride*, 47.

³³³ Rasheed Hastings, *John Hus*, (London, UK: Shrimpton & Son, 1879), 1.

³³⁴ Brian Tierney and Sidney Painter, *Western Europe in the Middle Ages 300–1475*, 5th ed. (New York, NY: McGraw-Hill, 1983).

³³⁵ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 86.

³³⁶ Ozment, *The Age of Reform*, 167.

theological and social impact that the various heretical movements had on the medieval world and on the connections that these groups have with one another.

Tierney and Painter contend that, although there were clearly works and ideas of Wycliffe circulating in Prague in the early 15th century, Hus did not agree with all of Wycliffe's points.³³⁷ Hus was preaching the ideas of Wycliffe as they related to church wealth and adherence to Scripture, but he was less enthusiastic about Wycliffe's views on the sacraments, particularly his rejection of transubstantiation. As Tierney and Painter comment, 'Hus was a preacher and reformer rather than a theologian and scholar,'³³⁸ suggesting that Wycliffe's focus was on the larger spiritual issues, whereas Hus' focus was on more practical ones.

Russell argues that the followers of Wycliffe and Hus are connected and are precursors to the Protestant Reformation.³³⁹ These movements 'were similar to previous medieval dissent, but in other ways they resembled the future Protestant Reformations.'³⁴⁰ For Russell, Wycliffe and Hus were moving beyond earlier heresies and working toward a reform of the church that would be taken up by the later Protestant reformers. He views:

The period from 1350 to 1650...as a unity where the old Reformist movements were transformed by the evangelical emphasis on the Bible, by the moral programs of the Renaissance humanists, and by the power of civil authorities, who reasserted their rights as guardians of order to a higher degree than in the early Middle Ages.³⁴¹

To Russell, Wycliffe and Hus stood apart from their predecessors, in large part because 'Wycliffe and Hus were both intellectuals with well-defined systems,' as opposed to the more loosely defined movements, such as the 'Waldensians... Fraticelli and Joachites... and the

³³⁷ Tierney and Painter, *Western Europe in the Middle Ages 300-1475*, 112.

³³⁸ Tierney and Painter, *Western Europe in the Middle Ages 300-1475*, 113.

³³⁹ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 80.

³⁴⁰ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 80.

³⁴¹ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 80.

radical mystics.³⁴² He maintains that, because of circumstances both secular and spiritual, such as England's isolation from the rest of the Catholic world³⁴³ and the native Bohemian reform movement into which Hus tapped,³⁴⁴ combined with their intellectual rigor, Wycliffe and Hus had more in common with the Reformation groups that followed. Like Luther, Calvin, and Zwingli, Hus and Wycliffe had developed their beliefs within the intellectual boundaries of the Church, detailing what exactly they believed and backing it up with evidence found in Scripture.

For Ozment, like Russell, Hus was an important precursor to the Protestant Reformation: '[P]rior to the Protestant Reformation no religious movement had advanced more successfully against the late mediaeval church than the Hussites of Bohemia.'³⁴⁵ Ozment also recognizes the importance of the Wycliffe–Hus connection, noting that 'the influence of Wycliffe's writings gave the Hussite movement both an international dimension and a distinctly heretical association.'³⁴⁶ He outlines the ways in which Wycliffe's ideas were transmitted to Prague, culminating in 1407, when 'the bulk of Wycliffe's work was in circulation in Prague and avidly read by Huss's circle.'³⁴⁷ He notes that as early as 1403, the German section (as opposed to native Bohemians) of the University of Prague sought to ban Wycliffe's works, but that 'efforts to proscribe Wycliffe's teaching in Prague were like attempts to ban a book in Boston: demand soared.'³⁴⁸ At this time, Hus became Wycliffe's defender, and the Hussites began to demand 'vernacular translations of the Bible and lay

³⁴² Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 80.

³⁴³ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 81.

³⁴⁴ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 81.

³⁴⁵ Ozment, *The Age of Reform*, 165.

³⁴⁶ Ozment, *The Age of Reform*, 165.

³⁴⁷ Ozment, *The Age of Reform*, 165.

³⁴⁸ Ozment, *The Age of Reform*, 166.

communion with both cup and bread.’³⁴⁹ To Ozment, ‘both demands reflected the common egalitarian strain of the dissenting spiritual movements of the Late Medieval Period,’³⁵⁰ thus connecting Wycliffe and Hus to one another and to other heretical movements. Ozment views the Hussites as an extension and modification of Wycliffe’s main ideas that cannot be understood in any other way. The teachings of Wycliffe and Hus were the culmination of a series of heretical movements, starting with the Fraticelli and Waldensians and ending just after the Hussite pinnacle of influence with the Protestant Reformation.³⁵¹

3.5.3. This Author’s Conclusions

In this author’s analysis, the Wycliffe–Hus connection was similar to that posited by Spinka, Odlozilik, Fudge, Russell, and Ozment. As was shown in Chapter 2, the Early Quakers were a unique amalgamation of beliefs and practices that they assemble from both local and international components.³⁵² The specific set of circumstances brought on by the English Civil War³⁵³ followed by the restoration of the monarchy³⁵⁴ caused a political situation that first allowed the Early Quakers to form and flourish and then to change their views so as to remain relevant in changing times.³⁵⁵

The Hussite movement represents a similar situation—namely, the unique political situation in the convergence of the disaffection with the rule of the Holy Roman Emperor, nascent Czech nationalism, and the marriage of Anne to Richard II bringing Bohemia and England into closer contact.³⁵⁶ There are also instances of members of the early Hussite

³⁴⁹ Ozment, *The Age of Reform*, 166.

³⁵⁰ Ozment, *The Age of Reform*, 166.

³⁵¹ Ozment, *The Age of Reform*, 166.

³⁵² See: Sections 2.2. and 2.5.

³⁵³ See: Sections 2.2. and 2.5.

³⁵⁴ See: Sections 2.2. and 2.5.

³⁵⁵ See: Sections 2.2. and 2.5.

³⁵⁶ See: Section 3.3.2.

movement, such as Jerome of Prague, traveling abroad and bringing back with them many new opinions. Wycliffe was one of the chief influences of the early Hussite movement, but he was not the only one, as evidenced by Jerome's association with Waldensians³⁵⁷ and the influence of Hus' experience as rector at the Church of Bethlehem.³⁵⁸

The connections between Wycliffe and Hus have been established, but the Hussite movement, like the Early Quakers, could only have come into existence at that time and in that place. Although the evidence suggests that a correspondence between Hus and Wycliffe exists, it also shows that they were not carbon copies or direct descendants of one another or even of other groups. In the end, the connection was one whereby Wycliffe influenced Hus, but whereby Hus and his followers accepted only some of Wycliffe's teachings, rejected others, and adapted still others to create a religious movement that meshed with the local Bohemian reform movement and religious practice.

3.6. Wycliffe and Hus in Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*

Written in 1563, John Foxe's *Acts and Monuments*, better known as the *Book of Martyrs*, detailed the persecutions of early Christians by pagans and the later persecution of non-Catholic Christians by the Catholic Church. The *Book of Martyrs* also includes official documents, such as injunctions, articles of accusation, and letters.³⁵⁹ It explains the theological arguments of the reformers, both those who remained in the Catholic Church and the Protestants who left the Catholic Church. Because it was full of woodcuts, even the illiterate could grasp the hideousness of the various means of torture that were used on

³⁵⁷ See: Section 3.3.2.

³⁵⁸ See: Section 3.3.2.

³⁵⁹ Foxe, *Foxe's Book of Martyrs: An Edition for the People* prepared by W.G. Berry (Berkley, CA: Apocryphile Press, 1911).

Protestant renegades. Some scholars claim that, in the period after its publication, the popularity of Foxe's book was exceeded only by that of the Bible.³⁶⁰

Educated at Oxford, Foxe was tutor to the children of the recently beheaded Earl of Surrey and a prominent Protestant under the reign of Edward.³⁶¹ With the ascension of Mary and the accompanying persecution of Protestants, Foxe began to feel significant pressure. Fleeing Queen Mary, Foxe settled first in Frankfurt, then Basle, before returning to England in 1539 and entering the ministry. Assisted by his pupil the Duke of Norfolk, Foxe undertook an early edition of his martyrology dealing mainly with Wycliffe and Hus.³⁶² In 1559, he expanded this early work to include persecutions beginning with Wycliffe and ending with Cranmer. Returning again to England, he expanded his martyrology and published it in 1563 under the name *Acts and Monuments*.³⁶³ An immediate success, a convocation of the Church of England in 1571 ordered that copies of the *Book of Martyrs* be kept in all cathedrals and in the houses of all church dignitaries for public inspection.³⁶⁴

The *Book of Martyrs* gave the English Protestant movement a primer on the persecution of those standing against the authorities. This sense of persecution marked many of the English sects, the Quakers included. Foxe's highlighting of the suffering of Wycliffe and Hus helped to propagate the theological ideals they espoused. These views of Wycliffe and Hus were Foxe's own interpretation of what Wycliffe and Hus believed, and because they were written for a specific purpose (the highlighting of the martyr's relationship to the

³⁶⁰ In the mid-19th century, William Forbush abridged Foxe's extensive work (running to at least seven volumes), removing most of the theological points but leaving the history of persecution. Forbush then 'updated' Foxe's work by adding chapters on anti-Protestant persecution that occurred after Foxe's death. James Gairdner, *The English Church in the Sixteenth Century* (New York, NY: McMillan & Co., 1902), 256.

³⁶¹ Foxe, *Foxe's Book of Martyrs*, prepared by W.G. Berry, 24.

³⁶² Foxe, *Foxe's Book of Martyrs*, prepared by W.G. Berry, 24-25.

³⁶³ Foxe, *Foxe's Book of Martyrs*, prepared by W.G. Berry, 25.

³⁶⁴ Foxe's *Book of Martyrs* prepared by Rev. Ingram Cobbin (London, UK, 1856), 3. Two more editions (1576 and 1583) were issued during Foxe's life, and five (1596, 1610, 1632, 1641, and 1684) within the next 100 years.

current situation in England), a biased opinion of Wycliffe's and Hus' personal stories and theological beliefs is presented.³⁶⁵ Foxe's work was written to promote his Protestant agenda, portraying Wycliffe and Hus in an idealized fashion. This means that the depictions were not necessarily historically accurate; therefore, the Early Quaker understanding of them was based on these idealized versions. Thus, Early Quakers were attempting to establish connections to this idealized impression of Wycliffe and Hus, not the historical truth. It also means that the Early Quakers were basing their understanding on Foxe's interpretation of Wycliffe and Hus, not on their entire body of work or the heresies that they spawned.

The *Book of Martyrs* provided English society, and, by extension, Early Quakers, with vivid examples of what could happen when those in positions of authority abuse their power and persecute those who disagree with them.³⁶⁶ When Early Quakers suffered persecution, they felt a kinship with those whose persecution was presented in the *Book of Martyrs*, strengthening the connection Early Quakers felt with the early Church.³⁶⁷ Moore,³⁶⁸ Spencer,³⁶⁹ and Braithwaite³⁷⁰ all agree that the *Book of Martyrs* helped to shape the Early Quaker movement by fostering the notion that suffering for one's beliefs was not only a possibility, but, in fact an integral part of the religious experience.³⁷¹

Three chapters bear importance to this dissertation, informing the correspondence among the QWC:

1. Chapter VII: An Account of the Life and Persecutions of John Wickliffe

³⁶⁵ Hill, *Century of Revolution*, 77.

³⁶⁶ Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down*, 33.

³⁶⁷ Braithwaite, *The Beginnings of Quakerism*, 44.

³⁶⁸ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 161.

³⁶⁹ Spencer, 'Holiness: The Quaker Way to Perfection,' 157.

³⁷⁰ Braithwaite, *The Beginnings of Quakerism*, 44.

³⁷¹ Moore, Chapter 12, in *The Light in Their Consciences*; Spencer, 'Holiness: The Quaker Way to Perfection,' 157.

2. Chapter VIII: An Account of the Persecutions in Bohemia Under the Papacy, The
Condemnation and Burnings of Jan Hus and Jerome of Prague, Persecution of Zisca
3. Chapter XIV: An Account of the Persecutions in Great Britain and Ireland, Prior to
the Reign of Queen Mary I.

For Foxe and many subsequent English Protestants, the persecution of the Lollards was the start of the suffering for religious beliefs that continued to their own time. In regards to this persecution, Foxe states:

The followers of Wickliffe, then called Lollards, were become extremely numerous, and the clergy were so vexed to see them increase; whatever power or influence they might have to molest them in an underhand manner, they had no authority by law to put them to death. However, the clergy embraced the favorable opportunity, and prevailed upon the king to suffer a bill to be brought into parliament, by which all Lollards who remained obstinate, should be delivered over to the secular power, and burnt as heretics. This act was the first in Britain for the burning of people for their religious sentiments; it passed in the year 1401, and was soon after put into execution.³⁷²

As this quote shows, Foxe regarded Wycliffe as the point at which the persecution he was examining started, and that Foxe himself had an affinity for Wycliffe and his story.

As confessional boundaries hardened during the 16th century, Protestant martyrologists sought to promote the superior validity of their martyrs over Catholic ones. Protestants, like Catholics, claimed their martyrs were ‘true,’ but for different reasons. Protestant martyrologists, most notably Foxe, presented Protestant martyrs as dying for the unadulterated faith Christ demonstrated, unlike Catholic martyrs, who followed the supposedly tainted faith of worldly men, the popes.³⁷³ That Protestants identified themselves with the earliest Christians was crucial for their martyrological identity. Protestants also did

³⁷² Chapter 8, in Foxe’s *Book of Martyrs*, prepared by W.G. Berry, 104.

³⁷³ Anne G. Myles, ‘Restoration Declensions, Divine Consolations: The Work of John Foxe in 1664 Massachusetts,’ in the *New England Quarterly*, vol. 80 no. 1 (2007): 37–38.

not view saints as venerated idols and intercessors for the living.³⁷⁴ Instead, a saint was anyone who had lived piously as a model Christian.³⁷⁵ Any person persecuted or executed for witnessing to his or her faith, therefore, could be considered a saint.³⁷⁶

Quakers, through the Meeting for Sufferings, used the tradition of martyrs and martyrdom to their advantage in relating their sufferings to one another and to English society. The Meeting strove to educate all Quakers on the statutes passed against them and to persuade all Friends to report the abuse they suffered while witnessing to their faith.³⁷⁷ By encouraging the sufferers to record the abuses they endured, the delegates of the Meeting for Sufferings collectively acted like martyrologists, collecting every scrap of evidence and propagandist material pertaining to the suffering of their sect's martyrs before their executions.³⁷⁸

The inclusion of Wycliffe and Hus in the *Book of Martyrs* means that many Early Quakers were undoubtedly familiar with Wycliffe's and Hus' narratives, including the reasons for their martyrdom. As Hill states, 'Foxe's *Acts and Monuments* established a pedigree for Protestantism among Lollard Heretics...'³⁷⁹ As Hill contends, because many Early Quakers looked to the experiences in the *Book of Martyrs* for inspiration, and because Wycliffe and Hus were prominent entries, many Early Quakers looked to them as spiritual predecessors who might serve as inspiration for their own religious journey.³⁸⁰

³⁷⁴ Megan Matchinske, *Writing, Gender and State in Early Modern England: Identity Formation and the Female Subject* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 25, 38–40.

³⁷⁵ Gairdner, *The English Church in the Sixteenth Century*, 67.

³⁷⁶ Ozment, *The Age of Reform*, 423.

³⁷⁷ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 159.

³⁷⁸ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 159–160.

³⁷⁹ Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down*, 33.

³⁸⁰ Hill also states one of 'two writers thought to have influenced Fox ...[was] John Foxe, the martyrologist...', he also notes that 'in the fourteenth century, John Wycliffe had been rector of Lutterworth, less than twenty-miles away' from Fox's birthplace of Fenny on Drayton. .

Early Quakers had a unique relationship to the *Book of Martyrs*, one that changed over time. Although Early Quakers accepted suffering, their understanding was from a biblical viewpoint, and not directly related to the *Book of Martyrs*. As Moore writes, ‘The style of some Sufferings tracts may have been influenced by [Foxe’s *Book of Martyrs*], but Quakers in the earlier 1650s did not say that they accepted suffering because they were in the martyrs’ tradition. The examples they referred to were invariably biblical.’³⁸¹ For at this point in time, the Early Quakers turned to the Bible for their inspiration.

A change came in 1657, with the printing of Anthony Pearson’s ‘The Great Case of Tithes Truly Stated.’ This tract explicitly links Early Quakers with the martyrs in Foxe’s work, using their beliefs as justification for Quaker ones. In outlining the justification for the Early Quaker refusal to pay tithes, Pearson states ‘And our famous Reformers, John Wickliffe, Walter Brute... whole arguments are at large in Fox his Acts and Monuments, did in their days bear their testimony against tythes, for which some of them suffers in flames.’³⁸² As Moore notes, ‘It was not until 1657 that Anthony Pearson wrote a pamphlet linking Quakers and earlier martyrs, and then he compared the Quakers only to John Wyclif ... and to John Hus.’³⁸³ This tract, placing Early Quakers directly within the English line of martyrs, gave the movement ties to a more direct and immediate legacy to which other English Protestants could relate.

A later example is seen in Edward Burrough’s ‘Persecution Impeached.’³⁸⁴ In this work, Burrough’s continues Pearson’s argument, broadening it to include not just Hus and Wycliffe, but also the other martyrs found in Foxe’s work. As the subtitle states, ‘wherein is

³⁸¹ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 161.

³⁸² Anthony Pearson, *The Great Case of Tithes Truly Stated, Clearly Opened, and Fully Resolved*. (London, UK: G. Calvert, 1657), 25.

³⁸³ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 161.

³⁸⁴ Burrough, *Persecution Impeached*, 1661.

contained a relation of the martyrdom of many such as dissented and opposed the Church of Rome; who are...vilified and reproached by the name and term of ancient phanaticks.’³⁸⁵

This work was written in response to a Catholic work justifying the burning of Protestant martyrs.³⁸⁶ By arguing against the burning of Protestant martyrs, Burrough hoped to justify a more measured response from the authorities than was being given at the time. This work helps to illuminate the nature of the relationship the Early Quakers believed existed between themselves and the earlier martyrs.

Other examples can be found in the tracts of Ellis Hookes. The first work’s title states its importance to this dissertation:

The Spirit of Christ, and the spirit of the Apostles and the Spirit of the Martyrs is Arisen, which beareth testimony against swearing and oaths, for which the martyrs suffered in the time of the ten persecutions and some since, which we also, the people of God called Quakers, do suffer for, as many thousands have done, for keeping the commands of Christ who saith, swear not at all: and also, here you may see such martyrs as could not put off their hat or bonnet to the Pope, nor his legate, and as example of one martyr that could not give sureties, being innocent, so that you may see in this book following, to swear not at all, nor to take oaths, nor to deny putting off the hat or bonnet, nor to deny giving sureties being innocent is no new thing, which is proved out of the Scriptures and Book of Martyrs.³⁸⁷

The other work, *The Spirit of the Martyrs Revived* (c. 1664–1665),³⁸⁸ also highlights the connection between the Early Quakers and the martyrs. These tracts firmly argue that the Early Quakers are directly related to the earlier sects found in the *Book of Martyrs*. In discussing the swearing of Oaths, Hookes specifically mentioned how one of Wycliffe’s ‘Articles...with many other, was condemned by the Council of Constance...’³⁸⁹

³⁸⁵ Entry for Edward Burrough in *The Friend’s Library, Volume 14*, ed. William Evans and Thomas Evans. (Philadelphia, PA: J Rakestraw, 1850), 484.

³⁸⁶ Entry for Edward Burrough in *The Friend’s Library, Volume 14*, 484.

³⁸⁷ Hookes, Ellis. *The Spirit of Christ, and the Spirit of the Apostles and the Spirit of the Martyrs is Arisen*, (London, UK: Printed by Giles Calvert, 1661), 1.

³⁸⁸ Hookes, *The Spirit of the Martyrs Revived*. (London, UK:S.N., 1664).

³⁸⁹ Hookes, *The Spirit of the Martyrs Risen*, 9.

In a piece titled 'A Measure Rule Concerning Liberty and Persecution,' Fox uses the examples set within the *Book of Martyrs* in his discussion of Liberty and Persecution.³⁹⁰ In arguing against the persecution of Early Quakers, Fox states:

As you may read in the *book of martyrs*. Were these martyrs disobedient in the ten persecutions, and since to the papists, in which so many thousands suffered for meeting together, for not paying tythes, and for not swearing, and not yielding to their principles and practice, that persecuted them? was it evil in them that persecuted them? And is it good now in you that makes us suffer for the same things? so are the martyrs, and persecutors, and you one, or the martyrs and we one, who have suffered all along?³⁹¹

In *Arraignment of Popery*, Fox and Hookes extensively quote from or use the *Book of Martyrs* as a primary source.³⁹² This shows that not only was Fox using the *Book of Martyrs* as an inspiration for the Early Quakers, but that he also believed his readers would be familiar with it.

A later example is provided by George Keith in his work *Immediate Revelation* (1676), where he discusses how:

Foxes Book of Martyrs is to be seen at large, how many of the Lords Witnesses who were raised up by him, to testifie against the corruptions of the Church of Rome, and her Ministry, did Prophecy, and their Prophecies are in the said book Recorded, as they rose up one after another in each Generation; for the Lord never wanted his Witnesses all along, though they were but few.³⁹³

This tract shows that, as persecution continued into the 1670s, Quakers continued to appeal to their belief in a similarity to the English martyrs as a way to show their fellow countrymen that they were a part of a larger English tradition.

³⁹⁰ Fox, 'Concerning Liberty and Persecution' in the *Works of George Fox (Volume 4)*, (Philadelphia PA: J. Harding, 1831 [1706]). 307-311.

³⁹¹ Fox, *Works of George Fox (Volume 4)*, 308.

³⁹² George Fox. *The Arraignment of Popery*, (London, UK: Unknown, 1667), 49, 52.

³⁹³ George Keith. *Immediate Revelation* (London, UK: Unknown, 1676), 197.

As shown above, there is evidence for Early Quakers' use and understanding of the *Book of Martyrs* in many different tracts and writings from different time periods. The Early Quaker relationship to the *Book of Martyrs* evolved over time, changing from identification with biblical martyrs, to pre-Protestant ones, to English ones in the prior generations. This identification helped to foster a sense of connection between the Early Quaker community and the larger English society in the hopes of alleviating or at least contextualizing the Early Quakers' persecution in defense of their deeply held beliefs.

3.7. Quaker References to Hus and Wycliffe

The printed evidence shows that the Early Quakers identified with Wycliffe and Hus in many ways, namely their views on the payment of tithes for the upkeep of a professional clergy, their views on the swearing of oaths, and the suffering that Wycliffe and Hus endured in defense of their beliefs. The fact that Wycliffe and Hus featured prominently in Foxe's *Book of Martyrs* gave credence to the Early Quakers own situation, giving the Early Quaker movement an example of lives lived within the spiritual framework in which the Early Quakers felt themselves to exist. It shows that the Early Quakers self-identified with Wycliffe and Hus, both in terms of their fights against the Church and in terms of the ideas they espoused.

By identifying publicly with Wycliffe and Hus, the Early Quakers hoped to use their example as a way to self-identify with a tradition already held in high esteem by the general public via the *Book of Martyrs*. As a widely read work, one which had a large hand in the general religious attitude of England at the time, the Early Quakers use of the *Book of Martyrs* was similar to their use of the Bible, which was easily transmitted to and understood by the general public.

In a tract from Fox's *Arraignment of Popery*,³⁹⁴ both Wycliffe and Hus are mentioned in the discussion of tithes. Quoting Wycliffe, Fox says, 'That Tythes are pure Alms, and that the Parishioners may for the use of their Curates, detain and keep them back, and bestow them upon others at their own will and pleasures. [found in] *Act. & Mon.* p. 435.'³⁹⁵ In the same work, in Chapter 16, 'Concerning Swearing,' Fox also mentions Wycliffe and Hus, stating:

And *John Wickliff*, whose works are so much esteemed by the Protestants, his judgment was, That all Oaths which be made for any Contract or civil Bargain betwixt man and man, be unlawfull; and *John Hus* and *Jerome of Prague* were burnt (for holding his Opinion)³⁹⁶

Tracts such as this one illustrate that Early Quakers were not only familiar with Wycliffe's works, but that they felt such an affinity with them that they used them as proof of their beliefs. Hus is referenced by Fox immediately thereafter, again in support of Early Quakers' beliefs respecting tithes:

And the Proposition aforesaid is largely defended by *John Hus* in the said Book of Martyrs, p. 461. and in the conclusion of the Discourse it is affirmed, That the Clergy are not Lords and Possessors of Tythes, or other Ecclesiastical Goods, but only Stewards, and after the necessity of the Clergy is once satisfied, they ought to be given to the poor.³⁹⁷

This use of both Wycliffe and Hus as examples and exemplars illustrates that the correspondence between Early Quakers and Wycliffe and Hus was evident to the Early Quakers themselves.

Another mention of Wycliffe, as well as the *Book of Martyrs*, is made by Isaac Penington, writing on the issue of tithes in *A Brief Account of Some Reasons (Amongst many*

³⁹⁴ Fox, *The Arraignment of Popery*, 49.

³⁹⁵ Fox, *Arraignment of Popery*, 49.

³⁹⁶ Fox, *Arraignment of Popery*, 61.

³⁹⁷ Fox, *Arraignment of Popery*, 49.

that might be given).³⁹⁸ In response to the question ‘Why We Cannot Pay Tithes,’ Penington writes:

Because tithes were not a maintenance appointed by Christ for his ministers, but were set up by the Pope (as the maintenance of his ministers) since the days of the apostles. And this maintenance by tithes, Wickliff and others bore a testimony against, and divers of the martyrs in queen Mary's days suffered for; as by the articles charged against them, and the testimony that they held forth, may appear.³⁹⁹

Again, we see Wycliffe being equated with the ‘martyrs in queen Mary’s days,’ who are discussed in the *Book of Martyrs*, and Wycliffe’s theology being used as justification for one of the main tenants of Early Quakerism.

The evidence suggests that Early Quaker reliance on the teachings of Wycliffe and Hus was informed mainly by second-hand understandings of Wycliffe and Hus, understandings based on either general knowledge about them at the time or most likely from the *Book of Martyrs*. There is no evidence that any such reliance resulted from direct contact between the Early Quakers and later generations descended from the Hussites. After the Battle of White Mountain (1620),⁴⁰⁰ there is no evidence to suggest any of them migrated to England.⁴⁰¹

³⁹⁸ Isaac Penington, ‘A Brief Account Why those People called Quakers cannot do some Things on the one hand, and forbear doing of some Things on the other hand; for which they have suffered, and do still suffer, so much Violence from the People, and such sore Persecution from the Teachers and Magistrates of these Nations. Whereby it may appear to all, who are willing to take any fair Consideration of their Cause, that their Sufferings are for Righteousness Sake, because of the Integrity of their Hearts towards God, and void of any just Ground of Offence towards Man.’ in *The Works of the Long-Mournful and Sorely Distressed Isaac Penington* (London, England: S. Clark, 1761) [1660] 355-356.

³⁹⁹ Penington, A Brief Account, 355.

⁴⁰⁰ In the Battle of White Mountain, forces of the Protestant King Frederick V of Bohemia were heavily defeated by the Catholic forces of the Holy Roman Emperor, and the Hussites of Bohemia were forced into exile. Schaff, *John Huss: His Life*, 333.

⁴⁰¹ Evidence denotes primary sources, such as records of migration, contemporaneous writings, church records of the spread from Bohemia to England by any specific person or group of people.

3.8. Chapter Summary

This chapter's purpose was to examine John Wycliffe and John Hus, and specifically their personal histories, theologies, philosophies, and historical and societal contexts. This chapter showed the social context in which Wycliffe and Hus came to prominence, the theological beliefs they espoused, the religious practices these beliefs inspired, and the political and social implications of these theological beliefs.

In terms of Wycliffe, the main defining beliefs are:

- The clergy has been corrupted.
- The Pope seeks to oppress the 'true' form of worship.
- The Bible is the sole and final authority on spiritual matters.
- Each individual is called by Christ to discern His message for himself.
- This need for individual discernment requires that there be a vernacular translation of the Bible.
- As a corollary to individual discernment, preaching should be freely open to all regardless of formal education.
- The faithful should emulate the 'true church' of Christ, including his poverty and that of his Apostles.

For Hus, these defining beliefs include:

- Opposition to the rule of the papacy.
- The absolute and final authority of the Bible.
- Opposition to the practice of simony.
- Continued belief in transubstantiation (unlike Wycliffe).
- Advocacy of a return to Utraquism.

The chapter concluded with a discussion of the different scholarly approaches taken in examining the Wycliffe–Hus connection, specifically the degree to which Hus was indebted to Wycliffe for his theological positions. As shown above, authors such as Loserth, Poole, and Schaff argue that Wycliffe was the greatest single influence on Hus’ theology.⁴⁰² For them, Hus’ works are, for the most part, Wycliffe’s, and any differences between them are slight variations of the same theology. Fudge, on the other hand, argues that Hus’ theology was uniquely Bohemian, drawing on that culture’s reforming tradition.⁴⁰³ For Fudge, the fact that Wycliffe’s and Hus’ theologies are similar stems from like-minded individuals coming to the same conclusions, with limited direct effect by Wycliffe on Hus. Other authors, such as Odlozilik and Spinka, argue for a more balanced interpretation, seeing Hus as adapting Wycliffe’s ideas to fit within the preexisting Bohemian reform movement.⁴⁰⁴ They see in Hus’ theology evidence of Wycliffe’s influence, but that of others as well. This approach, based on the evidence, is the one with which this dissertation concurs.

Finally, this chapter outlined the way in which the Early Quakers would have accessed Wycliffe and Hus in order to form the QWH’s correspondence. Starting with Wycliffe’s and Hus’ entries in the *Book of Martyrs* and the Early Quaker use of this text, this section outlined possible points of transmission of ideas between Wycliffe and Hus on one side and the Early Quakers on the other. This section concluded with an examination of how the Early Quakers referenced Wycliffe and Hus, specifically what context these references were made, which referred to Wycliffe and Hus, the works in which these references occurred, and what these references indicate about the Early Quakers’ understanding of Wycliffe and Hus.

⁴⁰² See: Section 3.4.1.

⁴⁰³ See: Section 3.4.1.

⁴⁰⁴ See: Section 3.4.1.

Chapter Four: The Quaker Correspondence with Wycliffe and Hus

4.1. Introduction

As shown in the Chapters 2 and 3, Wycliffe, Hus, and Early Quakers held systems of beliefs influenced by the societies in which they formed and the prevailing politics of Europe and the Established Church. Yet Wycliffe, Hus, and Early Quakers had many similarities of belief and practice. Chapter 4 explores those characteristics that, when considered together, form a correspondence among Wycliffe, Hus, and Early Quakers.

4.2. Characteristics of the Correspondence among the QWH

The Early Quaker movement emerged from the English Reformation. Although molded by their society, the Early Quakers were a unique entity, a combination of aspects and beliefs that, when taken together, created a movement that would continue to the 21st century. Yet Early Quakers did not arise in a vacuum, and events of the past influenced the development of their beliefs. The knowledge of previous martyrs as set out by Foxe gave Early Quakers an understanding of Wycliffe and Hus, and, whether consciously or not, that understanding may have influenced the direction of the Early Quaker movement.¹ Even if the influence of Wycliffe and Hus was not direct, this dissertation posits that there exists a clear correspondence among Wycliffe, Hus, and Early Quakers, suggesting that such influence occurred.

As set out in Chapter 1, nine characteristics² embody the correspondence between Wycliffe, Hus, and Early Quakers, each of which is discussed in detail below.

¹ See: Sections 3.6 and 3.7.

² The nine characteristics are (1) accessibility of Christ's message, (2) two separate Churches, (3) the authority of the Bible, (4) the need for personal study of the Bible and its translation to the vernacular, (5)

4.2.1. Accessibility of Christ's Message

The QWH found through their scriptural study an accessibility of the 'Truth' in Christ's message to all men and women so long as they opened themselves to it. This accessibility, which the Established Churches rejected, was emphasized by Christ above all else. This belief was the foundation of the QWH's theology and social programs and would color all that they preached and practiced. The QWH firmly believed that Christ 'was the true light that enlightens everyman was coming into the world.'³ As stated in the Bible, Christ was the Savior for all those who would open their hearts to his message.⁴ He was the one foretold in Hebrews⁵ and Jeremiah⁶ as creating 'a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah,' wherein 'they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest.'⁷

The QWH understood that Christ was the vehicle through which the Lord would enable the realization of this new covenant. He had been sent by the Father to shake the foundations of the world by establishing a new order based on his teachings of love, compassion, and striving to live a perfect and holy life.⁸ Christ stated that he was the Word of God incarnate, his representative on Earth, sent to speak to all humanity, from the lowest

opposition to Established Churches, (6) a return to a 'primitive church,' (7) reforming tendencies, (8) the imminence of Christ's return, and (9) the role of women.

³ Prologue to the Gospel of John, 9th verse.

⁴ Gwyn, *Apocalypse of the Word*, 104–108.

⁵ Hebrews 8:4–13.

⁶ Jeremiah 31:31–34.

⁷ From Jeremiah: 'The time is coming,' declares the LORD, 'when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they broke my covenant though I was a husband to them,' declares the LORD. 'This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time,' declares the LORD. I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD' because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest,' declares the LORD. 'For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.' Jeremiah, 31:31–34.

⁸ Gwyn, *Apocalypse of the Word*, 106.

leper to the most learned scribe.⁹ The truth in Christ's coming was that salvation was available to every human. 'Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.'¹⁰ It was this spark that allowed the individual to approach God and that was the seed for each individual's salvation. All else flowed from this truth, from Christ's command to protect and shelter the poor and innocent¹¹ to his directive to 'turn the other cheek.'¹² This message had a profound effect on the QWH, forming the overarching principle behind their theological models.

Fox, Hus, and Wycliffe all believed unwaveringly in Christ's accessibility and the ability of every individual to feel Christ's presence in their everyday lives.¹³ They each went through periods of intense personal scriptural study, and all three came to the realization that Christ preached a message of tolerance and acceptance, one that allowed anyone who would listen to His message to receive His saving grace. All three believed that this message had been obscured or ignored by the Established Churches, and by most other sects,¹⁴ in favor of doctrines that limited the chances for the salvation of the soul.

4.2.1.1. Wycliffe

Russell argues that Wycliffe came to believe that the truth Christ revealed in his coming, that each person had the seeds of the divine within him, should be the foundation for the structure of the Church, and 'that all Christians were equal, that none had dominion over

⁹ Gwyn, *Apocalypse of the Word*, 104–105.

¹⁰ John, 1:12.

¹¹ 'For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in.' Matthew 25:35.

¹² Matthew 5:38–40.

¹³ Compare this belief with the Calvinist concept of predestination, which stated that only a select, predetermined group was going to be saved. Those who were predestined were such regardless of their actions, and if an individual was not part of this group, they could do nothing to enter it. Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 82.

¹⁴ Such as the Cathars, who viewed Christ's message as a great cosmic 'secret,' with his full Truth revealed only to a select few. See: Sean Martin, *The Cathars: the most successful heresy of the Middle Ages* (New York, NY: Pocket Essentials, 2004).

others, and that all had a right to preach.’¹⁵ This meant that each individual in the ‘True Church’ had the right and duty to preach, because within each individual were the seeds of the divine. Without this seed, the status quo of the Established Churches made sense. But if, as Wycliffe believed, no Christian had dominion over any other, then this status quo must be torn down for the True Church to exist.

This position is in seeming conflict with Wycliffe’s views on predestination. Being a fervent defender of this belief, Wycliffe’s works speak of an elect group who would be saved while the rest of humanity was condemned, regardless of their actions.¹⁶ Yet, Wycliffe also said that one cannot know who is predestined and who is not, neither the individual nor the authorities of the Established Churches.¹⁷ Although those who were damned could not change their fate, those who were predestined could fall into damnation. Therefore, Wycliffe believed that each individual had to ensure that they were eligible to be saved if they were one of the predestined by accepting Christ’s message through biblical study and the proper display of faith.¹⁸ Those who did accept his message and were predestined could ensure their salvation, something that was impossible under the authority of the visible church. However, Wycliffe’s views on predestination were at odds with those of Hus and the Early Quakers, who did not believe in predestination or its implications.

4.2.1.2. Hus

Hus’ beliefs were similar to Wycliffe’s, specifically his seeking to create a community wherein ‘laypeople and religious standing on level ground, together participating

¹⁵ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 84.

¹⁶ Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, 516-517.

¹⁷ Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, 517-518.

¹⁸ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 84.

in the community of God with humankind’¹⁹ represented the True Church. Hus sought to break down the divisions, imposed by the Curia, which separated ‘laypeople’ and ‘religious’ (*i.e.*, the clergy) into two distinct camps. Schaff shows that, in Hus’ view:

The...Church is the body or congregation of all the predestinate, the dead, the living and those yet to be....The Roman pontiff and the cardinals are not the Church. The Church can exist without cardinals and a pope, and in fact for hundreds of years there were no cardinals.²⁰

Hus was pointing to the various times in Church history, particularly the apostolic era, when the community of believers existed without those who Hus viewed as actively impeding the individual’s salvation.

This belief in equality of laity and clergy is manifest in the importance Hus placed on practicing the Eucharist in both kinds (Utraquism), granting the laity the same access as the clergy to the body and blood of Christ, thereby breaking down one of the most visible dividing lines between these two groups.²¹ For Hus, full lay participation in the Eucharist by definition opened Christ’s message to all and was a requirement of the True Church. Utraquism thus exemplifies the Hussite belief in Christ’s accessibility to all, not just a select few.

4.2.1.3. Early Quakers

The Early Quakers took these views one step further, with Fox identifying the divine spark as the ‘Light within,’ which allowed for individual salvation, unconnected to the whims of Church hierarchy.²² Fox taught that his own experience of finding the divine light within was available to all, ‘if it was an impossibility, why did Christ die? What was the gospel

¹⁹ Fudge, *The Crusade against Heretics in Bohemia, 1418–1437*, 1.

²⁰ Schaff, *John Huss: His Life*, 123.

²¹ Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, 619.

²² Fox, *Some Principles*. 1.

for?’²³ For Fox, Christ’s purpose was solely to allow for the individual’s salvation through his presence. Fox went on to state:

And this *Light* is within, by which all these things are seen, and you that love this Light, you will see all these things above mentioned; Christ the *Mediator*, Christ the *Way*, the *Life*, the *Wisdom*, the *Sanctifier*, the *Redeemer*, the *Offering for your Sins*, and the Sins of the *whole World*; in that Light you will have the Testimony of it; and so he that believes will have the Testimony and Witness in himself.²⁴

For Fox, the Light within was very much the real presence of Christ inside each individual, without which salvation was impossible.

Fox also believed that this Light was within everyone and could be accessed by anyone who sought it out. It was not restricted to those who were educated to the exclusion of others, to those whose families could pay for an office, or to those who sought payment for their services.²⁵ Christ was present within each individual in the here and now, and his presence was felt directly by the Early Quakers.²⁶

4.2.1.4. Conclusion

For the QWH, the accessibility of Christ’s message to all—and through that message, salvation—was at the very foundation of their belief structure, and it influenced all of the other characteristics in the correspondence between the QWH. This belief led the QWH into conflict with the Established Churches, because it attacked the foundation of their authority to dictate to the faithful. This belief also led the QWH to promote the ideal of personal scriptural study, thereby placing the onus on each individual for his or her own salvation.

²³ Punshon, *Portrait in Grey*, 44.

²⁴ Fox, ‘Introduction,’ in *Some Principles*, 6.

²⁵ Fox, *Some Principles*, 5-6.

²⁶ Spencer, *Holiness: The Soul of Quakerism*, 27-32.

4.2.2. Two Churches

The QWH divided the world of the spirit into two groups: (1) those who belonged to the Established Churches and their hierarchy and (2) those who belonged to the ‘True Church,’ which the QWH defined as a spiritual community of believers working together for salvation regardless of social standing. For the QWH, the Established Churches had moved far from their duty of shepherding souls to their salvation.

4.2.2.1. Wycliffe

Wycliffe posited a belief that ‘the true church was not... the “visible” church represented by the bishops and other officers of order and their followers; rather it was the “invisible” community of all those whom Christ has saved.’²⁷ As Schaff states:

Wyclif’s definition of the church as the body of the elect was opposed to the current tenet that the church is the corporation of the baptized presided over by the pope and hierarchy and the popular idea that the church is the pope and the cardinals. As for the papacy, Wyclif uttered far more vigorous words about individual popes than did Huss. He put pontiffs into hell as freely as did Dante. He declared not only that the papacy is not infallible but likewise that it is not necessary to the church. Obedience to it is always to be determined by the agreement of the papal commands with the teachings of the Scriptures.²⁸

Wycliffe viewed the papacy as simply a human construct, with no biblical basis, and thus to be discarded as unnecessary to salvation. He argued that the papacy should be subject to the dictates laid out in Scripture, and the fact that they were not so subject meant that they had relinquished their right to lead the church. When Wycliffe ultimately equated the Pope with the Antichrist, ‘...the dichotomy had become clear. On the one side were God and the Bible; on the other side were Satan and the pope.’²⁹ His theological positions combined with his

²⁷ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 83.

²⁸ Schaff, *John Huss: His Life*, 52.

²⁹ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 85.

own personal interpretations of Scripture led Wycliffe to the conclusion that the office of the Pope had been transformed into that of the Antichrist.³⁰

4.2.2.2. Hus

As in other issues, Hus followed Wycliffe's example when it comes to the existence of two groups within the Church. It is generally agreed that, as Russell states:

Hus' *De Ecclesia* followed Wycliffe in teaching that the true church was the invisible community of the saved and that the papacy should be rejected; nonbiblical and nonapostolic, it had begun only in the fourth century under the patronage of the Roman Emperors.³¹

For both Hus and Wycliffe, the Church was not defined by the 'visible' one of Rome, with its traditions, ceremonies, buildings, dogmas, and the like, but rather by a community of like-minded individuals striving toward their salvation.

Hus' effort to create this 'invisible community of the saved' was evidenced by his promotion of the practice of Utraquism. For many Czech theologians, the scriptural evidence for Utraquism, emulating the primitive church, was a truer form of worship than that being expressed by Rome. This caused Bohemian theologians to actively support reforms that would return the Church to its true, scripturally evidenced form.³² Hus 'claimed the new communion rite was observed on grounds of divine revelation and who would dare withstand the Holy Ghost?'³³ They viewed the removal of the 'Lay Chalice' from the mass as representing a larger movement by Rome away from the True Church, which in turn was seen as contributing to the constant periods of social upheaval that marked the medieval period.³⁴

³⁰ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 84.

³¹ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 91–92.

³² Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 85.

³³ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 85.

³⁴ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 87.

4.2.2.3. Early Quakers

The Early Quakers also espoused the paradigm of two churches, believing in the visible–invisible distinction. Fox was:

led to distinguish sharply between the world of the Spirit in which God's will and presence are known to those who repent and are redeemed, relying on nothing but the inward revelation of Christ, and the 'creature'—the world of ordinary unredeemed human society.³⁵

This separation led Early Quaker leaders to reject the Established Church's 'visible' structures in favor of the 'spiritual' ones developed in their spiritual community.³⁶ Punshon argues that Fox believed:

the two existed side by side, but in the latter, instead of total reliance on God, people place confidence in their own traditions or natural abilities, in reason or conscience, for guidance in matters of faith. This is where humanity is vulnerable to corruption, and this is precisely where the Church fell victim to the tempter, when she lost sight of the distinction [between temporal and spiritual] Fox had been raised up to re-assert.³⁷

The Early Quakers sought to show the rest of society that Christ's church was not to be found in the steeple houses and hireling priests, but within each individual and the gathered spiritual community.³⁸ Aldam's 'False Prophets and False Teachers,'³⁹ tells its readers to look away from those 'sort of men [who] preach now, and that for hire, which is contrary to Christ's doctrine,'⁴⁰ and instead look to the Inward Light within their hearts to find the true church of Christ.

³⁵ Punshon, *Portrait in Grey*, 46.

³⁶ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 129-130.

³⁷ Punshon, *Portrait in Grey*, 46.

³⁸ Gwyn, *Apocalypse of the Word*, 98-112.

³⁹ Thomas Aldam, *False Prophets and False Teachers Described* (London, UK: Unknown, 1652). This is one of the earliest Quaker tracts to be printed, as shown in Barbour and Roberts, *Early Quaker Writings*, 358.

⁴⁰ Barbour and Roberts, *Early Quaker Writings*, 358.

4.2.2.4. Conclusion

The desire to establish the 'True Church' was at the heart of the QWH's reforming tendencies. This action would elevate the entire church community to the status of clergy, thus eliminating the laity, who now became responsible for their own individual salvation.⁴¹ To accomplish their reforming goals, the QWH looked to one source for inspiration and a record of Christ's physical presence on earth: the Bible. The articulation of the principle that there were two separate churches was one of defining characteristics of the QWH, helping to clarify the boundaries between each movement and larger society.

4.2.3. Authority of the Bible

Fox, Hus, and Wycliffe all espoused a theology based on the belief in the final authority of the Bible over the Established Churches' rule of faith.⁴² For Wycliffe and Hus, the Bible served as the basis for their efforts to reform and restructure the Church; while Fox's views were modified by his belief in the direct presence of Christ within each individual.⁴³ For Wycliffe and Hus, it was the unerring word of God to be followed strictly, but only when informed by the presence of the Holy Spirit. Fox and the Early Quakers, on the other hand, believed in using the guidance of the Inward Light, informed by biblical understanding. All three groups were espousing a theology in which personal understanding of the Bible trumped the human traditions and institutions of the Established Churches. Although their return to biblical authority was not necessarily unique, by 'elevating the biblical text above bishops, tradition, and reason alike,'⁴⁴ the QWH hoped to remove the

⁴¹ Belloc, *The Great Heresies*, 85.

⁴² For Wycliffe: Louis Brewer Hall, *The Perilous Vision of John Wyclif* (Chicago, IL: Nelson-Hall, 1983), 154 For Hus: Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, 628-629. For Early Quakers: Spencer, *Holiness: The Soul of Quakerism*, 15-16.

⁴³ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 90.

⁴⁴ Ozment, *The Age of Reform*, 174.

chance of human action, in the form of the Established Churches, hindering the communities' salvation.

To Wycliffe and Hus, the Bible was very much the 'un-erring Word of God.'⁴⁵ The Early Quakers ultimately took a more nuanced view, concluding that the inconsistencies in biblical text meant that it was not written directly by God, but rather represented man's imperfect recital of God's word.⁴⁶ This led the Early Quakers to search for the spirit behind the written word.⁴⁷

One of the main factors that enabled the QWH to place their faith in biblical authority was the increase in literacy rates amongst the general lay population.⁴⁸ As Ozment points out, 'direct access to sources gave laymen a sense of competence in matters previously reserved exclusively to high church authority,' allowing the laymen to 'appeal to the "true account," demand fidelity to the "original," and argue "from Scripture" against centuries of tradition.'⁴⁹ Russell explains that this increase in literacy:

led to increased intolerance of ignorant or corrupt clergy. Corruption certainly existed in the late medieval church, but probably no more than at any other time. But the more literate and knowledgeable the urban population became, the less they were willing to tolerate clerical incompetence and corruption. Ironically, orthodox zeal to criticize and correct corruption led to a wider perception of, and intolerance of, incompetence, so that orthodox reform prompted reform dissent.⁵⁰

⁴⁵ Ozment, *The Age of Reform*, 175.

⁴⁶ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 51-52.

⁴⁷ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 52.

⁴⁸ The social factors fostering this increase in lay literacy are too diverse to include in the scope of this dissertation, but include increases in the number of non-church-affiliated universities; the need to keep more detailed records as trade increased; the movement by a large part of the population from the countryside to the city, where more educational opportunities existed; and an increase in the availability of texts written in vernacular languages. For a more thorough discussion of this development, see: Russell, Chapter 7 in *Dissent and Order*; and Ozment, Chapter 1-4 in *The Age of Reform*.

⁴⁹ Ozment, *The Age of Reform*, 202.

⁵⁰ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 82.

This placed lay people on an equal footing with the clergy in terms of their access to the source of Christ's message.

Another factor leading to a reliance on the Bible as the final authority was dissatisfaction with the state of affairs in the Established Churches. Early Quakers and the followers of Wycliffe and Hus chafed at the positions taken by the Established Churches on many social, political, and theological issues.⁵¹ The QWH believed that the Established Churches were focusing too much of their energy on running their secular affairs, neglecting their primary duty of ensuring their congregation's salvation.⁵² Because they could no longer trust in the Established Churches' ability to properly perform their spiritual duties, the QWH looked to the Bible, the only legitimate source of God's teachings, as the ultimate authority in both the secular and spiritual realms.⁵³

4.2.3.1. Wycliffe

As Russell shows, Wycliffe's belief that 'the true church was not... the "visible" church represented by the bishops and other officers of order and their followers; rather it was the "invisible" community of all those whom Christ has saved'⁵⁴ caused Wycliffe to believe that 'most clergy were morally unfit,' with many belonging to the class of 'presciti,' those who were known 'by God to be incapable of salvation,' which became the basis for the attack by Wycliffe and the Lollards on the foundations of the Established Church.⁵⁵ Wycliffe 'was also suspicious of both internal illumination and reason. Thus, he turned to the Bible as

⁵¹ For Early Quakers, see: Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down*, 45; For Wycliffe and Huss, see: Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 23.

⁵² For a discussion of Wycliffe and Hus, see: Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 80. For a discussion of the Early Quakers, see: Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 63-65.

⁵³ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 86.

⁵⁴ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 83.

⁵⁵ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 84.

the highest authority,' placing his spiritual trust in the verifiable Word of God.⁵⁶ In *De Veritate Sacrae Scripturae*, Wycliffe 'proclaimed the infallibility of the Bible; every word was eternally true' and must be followed to the letter, regardless what the papal authorities stated.⁵⁷

Wycliffe concluded that, because there were so many existing corruptions within the Church, the blame for leading the Church astray must fall on tradition and papal direction.⁵⁸ These corruptions had been introduced after the time of the Apostles and after the writings of the early church fathers. Therefore, Wycliffe declared that the Bible held the highest authority for church doctrine and practice, overruling those contrary doctrines that had been decreed by the Pope or practices that had developed through church tradition.⁵⁹

Wycliffe's belief in a scriptural authority was rooted in the temporal precedence of the Bible over those texts written after the Gospels were recorded. As Emily Steiner states:

As one early Wycliffite writer argued, the authority of Scripture (the gospels and Pauline Epistles) is based on its antiquity, and therefore other more recent scriptures, commentaries, and man-made documents are inherently false. Consequently, charters, indulgences, and all 'new' texts should be upheld only if they are supported by the gospels.⁶⁰

For Wycliffe, the Bible was the touchstone upon which all spiritual and social beliefs must be tested. Wycliffe 'posit[ed] an inclusive spiritual community constituted by Christ at the original moment on the cross and authorized by Scripture alone.'⁶¹

In *De Ecclesia*, Wycliffe states:

We ought to believe in the authority of no man unless he say the Word of God. It is impossible that any word or any deed of man should be of equal authority with Holy Scripture. ... Believers should ascertain for themselves what are the

⁵⁶ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 84.

⁵⁷ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 84.

⁵⁸ Deansley, *The Lollard Bible and Other Medieval Bible Versions*, 55.

⁵⁹ John Stacey, *John Wyclif and Reform*, (London, UK: Lutterworth Press, 1964), 43.

⁶⁰ Steiner, 'Lollardy and the Legal Document,' 162.

⁶¹ Steiner, 'Lollardy and the Legal Document,' 162.

true matters of their faith, by having the Scriptures in a language which all may understand. For the laws made by prelates are not to be received as matters of faith, nor are we to confide in their public instructions, nor in any of their words, but as they are founded in Holy Writ, since the Scriptures contain the whole truth.⁶²

Similarly, Wycliffe's treatise on the truth of Holy Scripture, *De Veritate Sacrae Scripturae*, argued for the literal divine inspiration of the Bible.⁶³

Stacey concludes 'Wycliffe's view of the all-sufficiency of Scripture sharply distinguished him from the medieval schoolmen who recognized little if any difference between Scripture and tradition, both of which were for them part of *auctoritas*.'⁶⁴ He also says, 'This position was a revolutionary one, for it meant that "Goddis lawe" must take preference over the decrees and pronouncements of Mother Church as the competent and proper authority for Christian truth and practice.'⁶⁵

Wycliffe was called 'Doctor evangelicus' by his English and Bohemian followers.⁶⁶ Of all the reformers who preceded Martin Luther, Wycliffe put most emphasis on Scripture: 'Even though there were a hundred popes and though every mendicant monk were a cardinal, they would be entitled to confidence only in so far as they accorded with the Bible.'⁶⁷ The Bible alone was fully sufficient for the government of this world (*De sufficientia legis Christi*). From the Bible Wycliffe drew comprehensive statements in support of his reformatory views—coming to this conclusion after intense study and many spiritual conflicts.⁶⁸ He tells that, as a beginner, he was desperate to comprehend the passages dealing with the activities of the divine Word, 'until by the grace of God he was able to gather the

⁶² Wycliffe, *De Ecclesia*, 1.

⁶³ McFarlane, *Wycliffe and English Non-Conformity*, 77; Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, 511–516.

⁶⁴ Stacey, *John Wyclif and Reform*, 80–81.

⁶⁵ Stacey, *John Wyclif and Reform*, 80–81.

⁶⁶ Stacey, *John Wyclif and Reform*, 80.

⁶⁷ Stacey, *John Wyclif and Reform*, 82.

⁶⁸ Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, 500–501

right sense of Scripture, which he then understood. But that was not a simple task. Without knowledge of the Bible, there can be no peace in the life of the Church or of society, and outside of it there is no real and abiding good; it is the one authority for the faith.’⁶⁹

4.2.3.2. Hus

Hus expressed his belief in the ultimate authority of the Bible in *De ecclesia (The Church)*.⁷⁰ As shown by Schaff, Hus, like Wycliffe, believed that the corruption of the papal authorities, along with their claims to the same authority as Christ, were stark warnings that individuals cannot rely on others to ensure their own salvation.⁷¹ Hus and his followers believed that it was human nature to be fallible, which caused them to look to the Bible, as the infallible Word of God, for guidance to salvation.⁷²

As Russell argues, this belief is reflected in the work of ‘Matthias of Janov, a scholar who provided the theoretical basis for the Bohemian Reform Movement...[who] wrote 12 rules of conduct derived, not from monastic or conciliar roots, but directly from the Bible.’⁷³ Matthias rejected the apostolic succession from Peter on which papal authority was derived, as well as the western monastic tradition codified by St. Benedict in his Rule.⁷⁴ Because this rule had been used as the blueprint for subsequent monastic movements, such as the Dominicans, Matthias was rejecting the basis for the entire structure of the Catholic Church.⁷⁵

As was the case with Wycliffe, reliance on biblical authority became one of the defining characteristics of Hus’ theology. Schaff shows Hus’ insistence on biblical authority, stating that:

⁶⁹ Stacey, *John Wyclif and Reform*, 82.

⁷⁰ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 90.

⁷¹ Schaff, *John Huss: His Life*, 54.

⁷² Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 89.

⁷³ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 89.

⁷⁴ Ozment, *The Age of Reform*, 159 and Russell, 89.

⁷⁵ Ozment, *The Age of Reform*, 159 and Russell, 89.

The Scriptures, or the law of Christ, as he liked to call them, are the supreme rule of opinion and conduct. The priest and people are obligated to follow them above all mandates of prelates and popes; customs instituted by the church, if at variance with them, are of no value. All commands are to be disobeyed which are outside the express authority of Scripture – *prater expressam auctoritatem Scriptures*. Yea, mandates of popes and cardinals which subvert the precepts of Christ, must be openly resisted, lest, by assent, one become partaker of crime.⁷⁶

Hus was encouraging individuals to use their own understanding of Scripture to trump those orders that were handed down by man. Hus was thus arguing for action in the form of disobedience against forces that would damn an individual's soul.⁷⁷ When coupled with his insistence that Scripture be read within the presence of the Holy Spirit, his position was very similar to that of the Early Quakers, who believed that, when an individual's interpretation of the Bible conflicts with the mandates of the Established Church, then the individual is required to act in conformance with his own interpretation to ensure his salvation.⁷⁸

Spinka shows how the Hussite insistence on Utraquism was directly related to their belief in the final authority of the Bible.⁷⁹ As Russell concludes, perhaps the most significant piece of scripture for Hus was Christ's exhortation:

Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.⁸⁰

Christ stated, without ambiguity, that the spiritual benefits of the Eucharist could only be gained if it was received in both kinds, exactly as it was at the Last Supper, as described in the Gospels.

⁷⁶ Schaff, *John Huss: His Life*, 283.

⁷⁷ Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, (3rd edition), 226-227.

⁷⁸ See: Section 4.2.3.3.

⁷⁹ Spinka, *John Hus: A Biography*, 143.

⁸⁰ John 6:53-6:57, KJV.

The papal authorities, drawing on their belief in their prerogative to arbitrate issues of faith, reasoned their way to the practice of only providing the bread (body) for the Eucharist to the laity for fear a sacrilegious spillage of the transubstantiated blood of Christ.⁸¹ To Hus, this was a blatant rejection of scriptural authority that drastically altered the fundamental and clearly stated way to practice communion. Christ's exhortation to participate fully in the Eucharist became the theological foundation of the Hussite movement, with the papal ban on communion of both kinds being the central issue that separated Hus from the Catholic powers.⁸²

However, some scholars posit that Hus was less absolute than Wycliffe in his interpretation of biblical authority. In his recent work, Fudge argues that Hus' views on the Bible were more conservative than those of Wycliffe, believing that 'Biblical interpretation should be reined in and guided by tradition and not permitted to be unduly influenced by personal preference or appeals to the unsubstantiated leading of the Holy Spirit,'⁸³ and 'Hus clearly regarded the Sentences of Peter Lombard as an alternative form of Scripture in terms of authority.'⁸⁴ Fudge argues that Hus did not share Wycliffe's view that the Bible is 'an imperfect record' or 'not the direct Word of God.'⁸⁵

4.2.3.3. Early Quakers

The Early Quakers also placed their trust in biblical authority, as shown in their extensive use of biblical passages to inspire their theological beliefs as well as to support and

⁸¹ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 91.

⁸² Not only was their conviction in the perfection of the Scriptures strong enough to cause the Hussites to separate themselves from the papal authorities, it was also the source of divisions within the Hussite movement as well. For example, difficulties on defining the exact nature of the Eucharist split the Hussites into the Utraquist and Taborite sects. Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 92.

⁸³ Fudge, *Jan Hus: Religious Reform and Social Revolution in Bohemia*, 47.

⁸⁴ Fudge, *Jan Hus: Religious Reform and Social Revolution in Bohemia*, 46.

⁸⁵ Fudge, *Jan Hus: Religious Reform and Social Revolution in Bohemia*, 47.

define their arguments. Moore⁸⁶ and Gwyn⁸⁷ show how vital the Scriptures were in the Early Quaker movement. George Fox was known to have spent many hours of his youth reading and reflecting on the Scriptures, and ‘the earliest historian of Quakerism, Gerard Croese, reported in 1696 that a number of Friends competent to judge had agreed that “though the Bible were lost, it might be found in the mouth of George Fox.”’⁸⁸ Thus, Fox’s intimate knowledge of the Bible was well-known and admired by his contemporaries.

Early Quaker tracts reveal a deep familiarity with and understanding of the Bible and the high esteem in which Early Quakers held it.⁸⁹ As Moore outlines, Quakers used biblical passages in defense of their faith, as evidenced in the public debates they had with their theological opponents.⁹⁰ The Bible was also used in their self-defense against the persecution and prosecution by secular authorities.⁹¹ Although a general knowledge of Scripture was common for much of the English population at this time, for Early Quakers, it was the foundation for their theological and social agendas, and they laced their speech, public writings, and private discourses with biblical quotes and imagery.⁹²

Like Wycliffe and Hus, the Early Quakers looked with suspicion at the Established Churches’ ability to perform their sacred duties. As Gwyn shows, Fox openly accused the Established Churches of impeding the salvation of the laity.⁹³ Fox looked on at the ‘rich steeple houses’ with their ‘hireling priests,’ and was revolted.⁹⁴ As Spencer discusses, through his intimate knowledge of Scripture, Fox had a clear understanding of how far the

⁸⁶ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 51-53.

⁸⁷ Gwyn, *Apocalypse of the Word*, 118.

⁸⁸ Punshon, *Portrait in Grey*, 40.

⁸⁹ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 53-54.

⁹⁰ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 51-54.

⁹¹ Martin Davie, *British Quaker Theology Since 1895* (Lewiston, NY: E Meller Press, 1997), 190.

⁹² Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 51-52; Spencer, *Holiness: The Soul of Quakerism*, 15-16.

⁹³ Gwyn, *Apocalypse of the Word*, 24-25.

⁹⁴ Gwyn, *Apocalypse of the Word*, 24.

Established Church had strayed from the instructions of Christ and the form that the primitive church had taken.⁹⁵ Punshon agrees, arguing that Fox felt it was vitally important for every member of the 'True Church' to have the same familiarity with Scripture and to read and interpret it in the 'Light of the Holy Spirit,' because this would allow them to see the example of Christ and his apostles regarding the form and function of the True Church.⁹⁶ Fox preached that this was to be done both individually, through personal scriptural study, and corporately, within the boundaries of the Meeting for Worship.⁹⁷

One fundamental problem with literal reliance on the Bible as sole authority is that it is full of ambiguities and contradictions, inherently leading to confusion and conflict about the exact meaning. How could one be sure they followed the proper path without denying a different portion of Scripture? This problem had caused the Hussites to split into two distinct camps (as Russell⁹⁸ and Ozment⁹⁹ show), and Hudson explains that this prevented the Lollard movement from coalescing into one definable sect.¹⁰⁰ These tensions caused less friction within the Early Quaker movement, because Fox taught that the standard by which the Quakers could judge these ambiguities was, 'namely the Holy Spirit, by which the holy men of God gave forth the Scriptures, whereby opinions, religions, and judgments were to be tried; for it led into all Truth, and gave the knowledge of all Truth.'¹⁰¹ This reliance on an interpretation of Scripture informed by the Holy Spirit allowed Early Quakers to avoid, to some degree, the doctrinal divisions that plagued the Lollards and Hussites.

⁹⁵ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 128-130.

⁹⁶ Punshon, *Portrait in Grey*, 47.

⁹⁷ Punshon, *Portrait in Grey*, 46.

⁹⁸ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 92-94.

⁹⁹ Ozment, *The Age of Reform*, 170.

¹⁰⁰ Hudson, *Wycliffite Texts and Lollard History*, 124.

¹⁰¹ Fox quoted in Punshon, *Portrait in Grey*, 48.

As explained in Chapter 2,¹⁰² to Early Quakers, the Bible was an imperfect record of what God had told the men who wrote it and of what God would ultimately say again.¹⁰³ The Bible was a great source of inspiration and imagery, but not the direct Word of God. The Early Quakers recognized that other contemporary sects were only following the letter of the Bible and its teachings to the exclusion of any notion of using the spirit that inspired its writing and that lingered beyond the written letters.¹⁰⁴ The Early Quakers believed in looking beyond the written words to the spirit behind them. For the Early Quakers, ‘Christ was the Word...and so the Letter, or Bible, was not itself the Word, but nevertheless the Bible was inspired by the Holy Spirit, and was to be obeyed.’¹⁰⁵

4.2.3.4. Conclusion

The QWH’s reliance on biblical authority stemmed from their perception that the problems in the Established Churches were those of the temporal or visible world. The spiritual community was where salvation was to be found, not the visible one. For the QWH, the doctrines and traditions that had arisen in the Established Churches had obscured the path to salvation, eventually (in the opinion of the QWH) leading the Established Churches to abandon that path and thereby block the way to salvation for the laity. Because the Bible was a record of what had transpired during the time of Christ and his apostles, it provided the only clear path to salvation. To this end, the QWH espoused the ideal of personal salvation ensured only through an understanding of the Bible and its message, as discussed in Section 4.2.4. For Wycliffe and Hus, this led to a belief in the need for a Bible, translated into the vernacular and accessible locally.

¹⁰² See: Chapter 2, Section 2.5.10.

¹⁰³ Vann, *The Social Development of English Quakerism*, 32.

¹⁰⁴ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 52–53.

¹⁰⁵ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 52.

4.2.4. Personal Study of the Bible and Translation to the Vernacular

For the authority of the Bible to be properly understood, the QWH promoted personal, scriptural study. For Wycliffe and Hus, the absence of translations of the Bible other than in Latin prompted them to devote considerable energy to making vernacular translations.¹⁰⁶ By contrast, the Early Quakers were able to engage in intense, personal scriptural study with the then-recent King James translation, as well as the previously translation known as ‘The Geneva Bible’.¹⁰⁷ As shown by Moore,

In the mid-seventeenth century, the Bible was built into the framework of everyday life, and apart from extreme radicals, few people questioned its literal truth and its importance as a guide. In particular, the Bible, now accessible to any literate person, had a considerable influence on political developments.¹⁰⁸

Although this meant that the translation of the Bible was not of concern for the Early Quakers, they were still focused on allowing individuals the freedom to pursue biblical study for their own salvation. Early Quakers, along with Wycliffe and Hus, preached that personal scriptural study and interpretation, practiced with a heart open to the Holy Spirit, had to be the foundation for their gathered spiritual community.¹⁰⁹

4.2.4.1. Wycliffe

At the foundation of much of Wycliffe’s theology was his belief that the path to salvation was blocked by the inability for the common man to read and interpret the Bible in his own tongue. As Ozment shows, Wycliffe argued that Scripture was the sole authority in

¹⁰⁶ See: Sections 3.2.4 and 3.3.4.

¹⁰⁷ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 51.

¹⁰⁸ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 51.

¹⁰⁹ Biblical study and interpretation has for centuries been a central issue of debate within the Christian community. As Ozment discusses, two dominant schools of thought existed on the best way to engage in study of the Bible. One, inspired by St. Augustine, was based on the idea of an allegorical interpretation, wherein the Bible is true on different levels at the same time, and should be thus interpreted. For Augustine, allegory became the central mode of biblical interpretation. The other school of thought was based on the teachings the Antiochenes Hugh and Andrew of St. Victor, Thomas Aquinas, and Nicholas of Lyra. They based their interpretive method on a more literal interpretation of the Bible, hoping to ‘save’ it from the more abstract and allegorical method described by St. Augustine. Ozment, *The Age of Reform*, 65–68.

regards to all matters, spiritual and worldly.¹¹⁰ Wycliffe believed that ‘the Bible was to be understood not necessarily by professors and prelates but by the individual Christian reading it prayerfully with the help of the Holy Spirit.’¹¹¹ Wycliffe posited this would ensure proper worship and belief, because the individual could check his conduct and that of the community against the Bible’s teachings.¹¹² Wycliffe contended that, by permitting the Bible to be published solely in Latin, the Catholic Church hoped to keep the laity ignorant of the Bible’s true message, specifically as it relates to the form of worship¹¹³ and the role the clergy should play in society.¹¹⁴ He believed that, by maintaining that biblical study and interpretation was the sole province of trained clergy or cloistered monks, the papacy was attempting to keep the laity from seeing how far the Catholic Church had strayed from Christ’s original message.¹¹⁵

As regards the interpretation of Scripture, Wycliffe asserted the right of the individual Christian to judge for himself, without interference from church authorities.¹¹⁶ As Russell shows, Wycliffe proclaimed:

There is no human tribunal set over him to force him to its point of view. But while he has the right of judgment, he has by no means the right to exercise it in a flippant and egoistic manner. He can judge properly only under the conditions of a holy life and great study. Christian men should stand to the death for the maintenance of Christ’s gospel, and the true understanding thereof, obtained by holy life and great study, and not set their faith nor trust in sinful prelates and their clerks, nor in their understanding thereof.... And if Antichrist say that each man may feign that he has a right faith and a good understanding of Holy Writ, when he is in error, let a man seek in all things truly the honor of God, and live justly to God and man, and God will not fail to him in anything that is needful to him, neither in faith, nor in understanding, nor in answer against his enemies.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁰ Ozment, *The Age of Reform*, 69.

¹¹¹ Ozment, *The Age of Reform*, 85.

¹¹² Ozment, *The Age of Reform*, 82.

¹¹³ Ozment, *The Age of Reform*, 43.

¹¹⁴ Ozment, *The Age of Reform*, 44.

¹¹⁵ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 83.

¹¹⁶ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 84.

¹¹⁷ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 84.

For Wycliffe, each individual was duty-bound to understand the Bible personally, without being told what to think by a supposedly more-educated clergy.

Deansley comments, ‘Thus the need and usefulness of an English Bible was not the foundation stone of Wycliffe’s teaching, or of that of his followers: but it was the necessary and inevitable corollary of his doctrine of dominion by grace, and the immediate responsibility of every Christian for following the life of Christ.’¹¹⁸ She further states, ‘It [his doctrine of dominion by grace] also led logically to the demand for a translated Bible. If all men were in immediate relationship to God, and owed Him a righteousness and obedience to His law for which they themselves were personally responsible, they needed to study His law personally, to satisfy themselves that they were keeping it.’¹¹⁹

As discussed in Chapter 3,¹²⁰ Wycliffe realized that a critical tool to allow individual understanding of the Bible was to translate and print it in English. Wycliffe believed that this would enable anyone, regardless of social standing or level of education, to understand and interpret Scripture without the mediation of a preacher, giving individuals the opportunity and responsibility to save their own souls.¹²¹ This was a radical departure from orthodox Catholic doctrine, because it shifted the responsibility for salvation from the church to the individual, further eroding the need for a trained clergy. Wycliffe’s effort to ensure the availability of Scripture to all was a lifelong pursuit, and was continued by the Lollards after Wycliffe’s death.¹²²

¹¹⁸ Deansley, *The Lollard Bible*, 228.

¹¹⁹ Deansley, *The Lollard Bible*, 227.

¹²⁰ See: Sections 3.2.4 and 3.2.5.

¹²¹ Lawrence M. Clopper, ‘Franciscans, Lollards, and Reform,’ in *Lollards and Their Influence*. eds. Fiona Somerset, Jill C. Havens, and Derrick G. Pitard (Suffolk, UK; Rochester, NY: Boydell Press, 2003), 178.

¹²² Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, 572.

4.2.4.2. Hus

As Schaff outlines, Hus taught his students that they had a duty to read and understand the Bible on their own, and he pushed for a Czech translation to be made available to the general laity.¹²³ Schaff, in discussing the relationship between Wycliffe and Hus, shows that:

He [Wycliffe] insisted that the Bible should be put into the hands of the people. It is the Book of Life—*liber vita*—the Christian Faith—*fides Christiana*—the whole truth, the immaculate law. Its authority is supreme and its precepts to be obeyed, no matter what the church may set up as commandments. The priesthood's chief duty is to make known its contents. Every Christian should have it in his native tongue, that he may follow Christ and come to heaven...¹²⁴

Similarly, for Hus, 'the Scriptures should be in the hands of the people and that the priest's first duty is to expound their teachings to all men alike. They are to be in the vernacular, and in the hands of all,'¹²⁵ because this was the only way to ensure personal salvation.

Hus was convinced that the Bible should be presented in the language of the people, that salvation comes by faith in Jesus Christ, and that the Word of God is the final authority.¹²⁶ From this, Hus argued that to ensure one's personal salvation, one had to be able to read and understand Scripture, or risk following in the path of those eternally damned.

4.2.4.3. Early Quakers

The Early Quakers believed that each person was responsible for discovering and maintaining his or her own connection to God. This meant that each individual was personally responsible for his salvation, for ensuring that he was following the Light within.

¹²³ Schaff, *John Huss: His Life*, 33.

¹²⁴ Schaff, *John Huss: His Life*, 51–52.

¹²⁵ Schaff, *John Huss: His Life*, 282.

¹²⁶ Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, 637–638.

To Fox and the other Early Quakers, the touchstone with which to test the leadings of the Holy Spirit was the Bible.

Gwyn¹²⁷ and Moore¹²⁸ agree that the Early Quakers viewed the Bible in both traditional and unique ways, although Gwyn argues that the Early Quakers held a more literal interpretation of the Bible,¹²⁹ whereas Moore contends that the Early Quakers used the Bible for language and imagery.¹³⁰ As Moore comments, ‘in the mid-seventeenth century, the Bible was built into the framework of everyday life, and apart from extreme radicals few people questioned its literal truth and its importance as a guide.’¹³¹

Like Wycliffe and Hus, the Early Quakers believed that the problems infecting the visible church were directly related to its reliance on human traditions and institutions over the authority of Scripture informed by the presence of the Holy Spirit.¹³² To this end, Early Quakers, when confronted with accusations of heresy and blasphemy, would continually turn to the Bible to justify their arguments.¹³³ Early Quakers also used biblical imagery and analogies to ensure their arguments would be understood by their audience.¹³⁴

This belief in scriptural authority was influenced by the Quaker view of ‘Immediate Revelation,’ which gave Early Quakers a sense that each individual was required to interpret the Scriptures on his own, without the interference of hireling priests or meddling magistrates.¹³⁵ Because Christ was present here and now in the form of the Holy Spirit, He

¹²⁷ Gwyn, *Apocalypse of the Word*, 25.

¹²⁸ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 51–60.

¹²⁹ Gwyn, *Apocalypse of the Word*, 22.

¹³⁰ See: Section 2.5.9.3

¹³¹ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 51.

¹³² Spencer, *Holiness: The Soul of Quakerism*, 16.

¹³³ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 56–57.

¹³⁴ See: Section 2.5.9.3

¹³⁵ Gwyn, *Apocalypse of the Word*, 58.

would inform an individual's understanding of the Bible.¹³⁶ This led Early Quakers to hold a more allegorical interpretation of the Bible than that advocated by Wycliffe or Hus. Yet, like Wycliffe and Hus, the Early Quakers argued that the Bible was the only available record of Christ's first appearance on earth during the Apostolic Era... Unlike Wycliffe and Hus, the Early Quakers modified biblical authority by combining it with God's direct guidance, accessed via the Inward Light. The Early Quakers placed this above things like human tradition as the basis for the Church's structure.¹³⁷

4.2.4.4. Conclusion

For the QWH, personal study of the Bible was a central tenet for their respective movements, because this would allow each person to ensure his or her own personal salvation. When followed, this belief ultimately lead the QWH into opposition with the Established Churches, who believed their rules and traditions proved they held a monopoly on biblical study and thus the path to salvation, as discussed in the next section.

4.2.5. Opposition to Established Churches

The QWH's opposition to the Established Churches was rooted in their belief that the Established Churches had fallen far from the apostolic ideal, in terms of structure, practice, and message. As discussed below, the QWH believed that the Established Churches had diverged so significantly from Christ's teaching that they no longer were performing the duties with which Christ had charged them in the Bible. The QWH thus concluded that the Established Churches had become a hindrance to their only true mandate, the salvation of souls. The QWH were reacting to attempts by the Established Churches to solidify the

¹³⁶ Gwyn, *Apocalypse of the Word*, 63.

¹³⁷ Spencer, *Holiness: The Soul of Quakerism*, 15-17.

control they exerted on all aspects of the average lay person's life, both secularly and spiritually. Wycliffe and Hus were reacting to the 11th-century attempts by the clergy to consolidate their position as the sole authority in spiritual affairs.¹³⁸ Early Quakers were reacting to attempts to establish the 'True Church' by the Anglican Church and other early 17th-century English sects who claimed theirs was the only path to salvation.¹³⁹

These attempts at control by the Established Churches were a challenge to the authority of Christ, and therefore a challenge to the availability of Christ's salvation to all.¹⁴⁰ From this premise, the QWH took the stance that the Established Churches were in apostasy, outside of Christ's grace and incapable of performing their sacramental duties.¹⁴¹ The belief in the apostasy of the Established Churches led the leaders of the QWH to the conclusion that a distinction existed between 'the "Roman Church," led by the pope, and the "Universal Church," whose head could always and only be Christ' within the temporal world.¹⁴² This Universal (or True) Church was to be a 'community of the faithful,' bound together by the faith of individuals and 'an idea of spiritual brotherhood that necessarily invalidates the works of the institutional Church.'¹⁴³

4.2.5.1. Wycliffe

On the subject of the Church, Wycliffe was both a radical innovator and a precursor of 16th-century teaching. He took pleasure in considering the invisible side of the Church and, rejecting the Roman Catholic concept of the church as a definite outward organism, he

¹³⁸ In the 10th and 11th centuries, the power of authority moved from that of a council of assembled bishops to that of the office of the Pope, creating a form of Papal Monarchy. See: Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 81; Fudge, *The Crusade against Heretics in Bohemia, 1418–1437*, 23; Somerset, ed., *Lollards and Their Influence*, 12.

¹³⁹ Hill, *Century of Revolution*, 45.

¹⁴⁰ Steiner, 'Lollardy and the Legal Document,' 161.

¹⁴¹ First outlined by Wycliffe in *De Potestate (On Power)* c. 1379.

¹⁴² Ozment, *The Age of Reform*, 162.

¹⁴³ Steiner, 'Lollardy and the Legal Document,' 161.

defined the church as the whole body of God's elect.¹⁴⁴ As discussed in Chapter 3,¹⁴⁵ throughout the 1370s, Wycliffe expounded his belief in the need for the divestment of ecclesiastical wealth, his offense at the continuing and deliberate misinterpretation of scriptural mandates on church structure by the papacy, his concern that there is a vernacular translation of the Bible, and his repudiation of the Catholic position on transubstantiation. From these theological positions, combined with his own personal interpretations of the Scriptures, Wycliffe concluded that the office of the Pope had been transformed into that of the Antichrist.¹⁴⁶

Wycliffe also believed that the clergy had become corrupted by concerns of the secular world. He, like many other reformers, attacked the practice of pluralism, by which individual members of the clergy amassed great personal wealth while ignoring their responsibility to the parishes they were appointed to serve.¹⁴⁷ For Wycliffe, once the clergy had been corrupted by the concerns of the secular world, they had abandoned their clerical duties, creating a crisis of spirituality for those in their congregations.¹⁴⁸ Wycliffe concluded that the infection of the clergy by secular concerns negated their ability to faithfully perform their spiritual responsibilities. This rendered the clergy not just obsolete, but actually an impediment to salvation.¹⁴⁹

For Wycliffe, the role of the clergy was to help ensure the salvation of individuals by providing them with the support and guidance to find the truth within Christ's message.¹⁵⁰ Given this role, Wycliffe opposed the Catholic Church's view that the clergy be a separate

¹⁴⁴ Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, 516-517.

¹⁴⁵ See: Section 3.2.2.

¹⁴⁶ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 84.

¹⁴⁷ See: Section 3.2

¹⁴⁸ Aston, *Lollards and Reformers*, 101.

¹⁴⁹ See: Section 3.2

¹⁵⁰ Stacey, *John Wyclif and Reform*, 122.

class of people, set apart from the community within which they lived.¹⁵¹ Moreover, believing that each person was responsible for his or her own salvation, Wycliffe opposed the precept that the clergy's role is to dictate right action or belief for their community.¹⁵² Instead, the clergy's role is to be a guide and teacher in the 'community of the saved,' providing the people with the tools they needed to pursue their own scriptural study and actively ensure their own salvation.¹⁵³ This meant that the clergy needed to be able to understand and interpret their own faith and impart it to the lay community without dictating it to them.

One antidote to a corrupt clergy was to translate the Bible into the vernacular, thereby depriving the clergy of a monopoly on reading and interpreting it, while simultaneously putting it to the forefront of religious life.¹⁵⁴ Wycliffe's outspoken support for an English translation of the Bible also brought him into direct opposition to the Catholic Church.¹⁵⁵

4.2.5.2 Hus

Hus' attacks on the abuse of ecclesiastical wealth grew naturally from his desire to eradicate the distractions of the secular world from spiritual concerns. Hus drew heavily on biblical examples of the poverty of Christ and the Apostles for comfort and inspiration.¹⁵⁶ This desire to mirror Christ's circumstances led some of Hus' followers to reject the trappings of the Catholic Church, going so far as to accuse the entire papacy to be in the thrall of the devil, actively preventing the return of Christ on Earth.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵¹ Stacey, *John Wyclif and Reform*, 123.

¹⁵² Stacey, *John Wyclif and Reform*, 123.

¹⁵³ Aston, *Lollards and Reformers*, 101.

¹⁵⁴ Aston, *Lollards and Reformers*, 13.

¹⁵⁵ Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 230-231; Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 84-85.

¹⁵⁶ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 101.

¹⁵⁷ Schaff, *John Huss: His Life*, 211.

Hus viewed the church not as a hierarchy; rather he ‘defined the church to be the totality of the elect—*universitas predestinatorum*—whether on earth, in heaven or sleeping in purgatory; or, to give his fullest definition, “the church is the number of all the elect and the mystical body of Christ, whose head Christ is; and the bride of Christ, whom of his great love he redeemed with his own blood.”’¹⁵⁸ As Schaff argues, this definition brought Hus into direct opposition with Rome, because it set aside the prevailing theory that the Pope and the cardinals constitute the church and that the Pope and the clergy are ‘true’ by virtue of their office even in the absence of purity and humility of life.¹⁵⁹

The separation of the clergy from the rest of society was one of the main factors that alienated Hus from the papacy.¹⁶⁰ The assignment of clergy to Bohemia from faraway places, both in distance and culture, was viewed as an attempt to stamp out unique Czech interpretations of Scripture. Withholding the lay chalice from the Eucharist ceremony, the need to be strictly educated in Catholic institutions to receive orthodox dogmas, and the funneling of church funds and property back to Rome created in Hus’ mind a situation in which foreign interlopers were dictating what to believe and removing the community’s wealth while failing in their primary duty to ensure their flock’s salvation.¹⁶¹

The clergy, in Hus’ theology, were also responsible for punishment of sins,¹⁶² reflecting Hus’ desire to create a seemingly ‘perfect’ way of life, with the presence of God infusing all aspects.¹⁶³ The Hussites were attempting to live their life in ‘holiness,’ and viewed the papacy as actively working against this effort. This position was also directly tied

¹⁵⁸ Schaff, *John Huss: His Life*, 275.

¹⁵⁹ Schaff, *John Huss: His Life*, 123.

¹⁶⁰ See: Section 3.3

¹⁶¹ See: Section 3.3

¹⁶² See: Section 3.3

¹⁶³ Schaff, *John Huss: His Life*, 124.

to the Hussite eschatology, because they saw the lack of punishment for what (in their views) were true sins as inhibiting the return of Christ to Earth.¹⁶⁴

4.2.5.3. Early Quakers

To the Early Quakers, the clergy represented all that was wrong with the formalized practice of religion as exemplified by the Anglican Church. Fox spoke derisively of ‘hireling priests’ in their ‘steeplehouses’ claiming a special ability to rule over their flocks as the lord of a manner ruled over his serfs.¹⁶⁵ Early Quakers sought a mode of worship that would allow them to freely practice as they were led by the Light.¹⁶⁶ For the Early Quakers, the ability for each person to find that connection to God within meant that each individual needed a spiritual community structured to help them find and nurture that connection.¹⁶⁷ However, the existing church structure was the antithesis of that community.

At the center of the Established Churches—and most other sects—is the concept of a clergy that leads a congregation of laymen. By rejecting the very need for that clergy, the Early Quakers presented a fundamental challenge to organized religion generally. The Early Quakers recognized the need for support and guidance from fellow community members as they traveled the path to spiritual awareness.¹⁶⁸ As Gwyn notes, Early Quakers’ reliance on experience, not formal education, for insight and spiritual knowledge eliminated the need for a clergy.¹⁶⁹ The leaders in the Early Quaker community derived their leadership not from academic training or appointment, but from their personal experience. As Barbour explains, this path to leadership, combined with the Early Quaker principle of ‘continual revelation,’

¹⁶⁴ Spinka, *John Hus*, 87.

¹⁶⁵ Fox, *Journal of George Fox*, 74.

¹⁶⁶ Tarter, ‘Go North,’ 88.

¹⁶⁷ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 123.

¹⁶⁸ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 131.

¹⁶⁹ Gwyn, *Seekers Found*, 226.

eliminated entirely the need for a defined clergy, because the revelations of the presence of God can come from any direction or person, not restricted to those trained as clergy or even to the Bible or its study.¹⁷⁰

Early Quakers sought to create a ‘spiritual community,’ one where the salvation of the individual and the community was the responsibility of each person, by all and in concert with one another.¹⁷¹ In such a community, the need of a separate class of clergy was not only unnecessary, it was dangerous. If, as the Established Churches (as well as many sects) demanded, individuals were to relinquish a personal role in their salvation to someone else, they not only risked damnation through the actions of another, but they also went against Christ’s message of truth and personal salvation.¹⁷²

The opposition of Early Quakers to the Established Churches is also exemplified by their rejection of the notion of the ‘church’ as a visible, tangible building. Early Quakers believed that communication with God did not have to occur at a specific time or place or in accordance with a set practice.¹⁷³ Fox said that ‘when [he] heard the bell toll to call people together to the steeple-house, it struck at my life, for it was just like a market-bell, to gather people together that the priest might set forth his ware for sale.’¹⁷⁴ As Jones comments on this passage:

The Friends from the time of Fox until the present have been careful to use the word ‘church’ only for the community of spiritual believers. The cathedrals

¹⁷⁰ Hill, *World Turned Upside Down*, 235.

¹⁷¹ Barbour, *The Quakers*, 38.

¹⁷² Barbour, *The Quakers*, 38.

¹⁷³ When asked by a priest how he defined the church, Fox responded, ‘I told him the church was the pillar and ground of truth, made up of living stones, living member, a spiritual household, which Christ was the head of; but he was not the head of a mixed multitude, or of an old house made up of lime, stones and wood.’ Fox, *George Fox: An Autobiography*. ed. Rufus Jones (Philadelphia, PA: Ferris and Leach, 1906), 93.

¹⁷⁴ Fox, *Fox: An Autobiography*, 107–108.

and churches were called ‘steeple-houses’ and their own places of worship were called ‘meeting-houses.’¹⁷⁵

4.2.5.4. Conclusion

To the QWH, the main impediment to the individual’s quest for spiritual salvation was represented by and was present within the Established Churches. These authoritarian church hierarchies placed various restrictions and roadblocks in the path of personal salvation. To the QWH, the continued attempts by the Established Churches to control all aspects of religious life were directly at odds with the teachings of Scripture. The QWH believed that by becoming overly involved in secular affairs, the clergy neglected their duty to their congregations, risking their salvation. The QWH’s solution was to follow the example of the Bible and return to a more primitive church, as discussed in the next section.

4.2.6. Return to the ‘Primitive Church’

Of the various interpretations of the Scripture taken by the QWH, one of the most important, in terms of the structure of both the church and society, was their belief in the need to return to a primitive form of Christianity. ‘Primitive’ in this context means to emulate practices at the very start of the Christian movement as presented in the Bible. To the QWH, the Bible laid out plainly the route needed to create a ‘spiritual community,’ a society of believers who were the ‘True Church,’ as exemplified by their rejection of contemporary church hierarchy and dogmas.¹⁷⁶ The vast array of edicts, bulls, rulings, traditions, dogmas, and the like resulted in a church that, to the QWH, was vastly different from the church revealed through their scriptural studies. To ensure salvation, to quiet the spiritual storm in their hearts, to follow Christ’s message, and to create Christ’s community here on Earth, the

¹⁷⁵ Fox, *Fox: An Autobiography*, 93.

¹⁷⁶ For Wycliffe and Hus, see: Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, 606.

QWH believed they needed to return the ‘spiritual community’ to the form outlined in the Bible. If the QWH modeled their communities on those representations found in the Bible, they could ensure their salvation.¹⁷⁷

4.2.6.1. Wycliffe

In his move to return to the primitive church, Wycliffe did not set up a new order of monks as previous medieval reformers had done.¹⁷⁸ As Russell states, he sought to strengthen the teachings and moral character of the parish priests.¹⁷⁹ Wycliffe’s Christianity was more scriptural than sacramental, and he saw the role of the parish priest as primarily teaching the Scriptures to his flock.¹⁸⁰

As Russell shows, Wycliffe boldly announced his belief in the sufficiency, authority, and infallibility of the Scripture apart from any human institution or person.¹⁸¹ Wycliffe observed that the abandonment of ‘evangelical law,’ ‘God’s Law,’ or ‘Christ’s Law’ (as he calls the Bible) and its replacement with the mixture of traditions represented by the papal authorities was at first slight, but it gradually increased, until wholesale corruption of the ‘visible’ church was the rule.¹⁸² In the *Trialogus*, Wycliffe says:

If Christ had gone, in the least degree, more into detail, the rule of His religion would have become to a certain extent imperfect; but as it now stands, layman and cleric, married man and monk, servant and master, men in every position of life, may live in one and the same service, under Christ’s rule. The evangelical law, moreover, contains no special ceremonies whereby the universal observance of it would have been made impossible; and therefore the Christian rule and religion, according to the form of it handed down to us

¹⁷⁷ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 84–85.

¹⁷⁸ Aston, *Lollards and Reformers*, 101.

¹⁷⁹ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 86.

¹⁸⁰ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 84.

¹⁸¹ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 84.

¹⁸² Aston, *Lollards and Reformers*, 101.

in the gospel, is of all religions the most perfect, and the only one which is in and by itself good.¹⁸³

As Russell¹⁸⁴ and Hudson¹⁸⁵ argue, Wycliffe's original contention for the supremacy of Scripture as the only rule of faith and life presages a fundamental principle of Protestantism, and a germ of the Reformation. As Russell outlines, although throughout the Middle Ages an occasional protest was heard against some individual doctrine or practice of the Church, there was no organized attack on the unscriptural institutions until Wycliffe called men back to Scripture and, pointing to it and to the state of the Established Church, bade them to see which was the true church.¹⁸⁶ Wycliffe's perpetual appeal was to Scripture as against tradition or authority and he called for a return to the primitive church, represented by the early church fathers to whom Scripture was everything and who fervently sought its universal dissemination.¹⁸⁷

Wycliffe organized his earliest followers into teams of itinerant preachers modeled on those found in the Bible.¹⁸⁸ In this way, too, Wycliffe espoused the return to a primitive church. These preachers were not necessarily educated,¹⁸⁹ instead being inspired by Wycliffe's insistence that they study the Bible and follow its message.¹⁹⁰

4.2.6.2. Hus

For Hus, the papal construction on top of the foundation of the true church of Christ's believers was a travesty.¹⁹¹ Schaff¹⁹² and Spinka¹⁹³ show that Hus viewed the church

¹⁸³ Wycliffe, *Triologus*, 1.

¹⁸⁴ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 84.

¹⁸⁵ Hudson, *Wycliffite Texts and Lollard History*, 65.

¹⁸⁶ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 82.

¹⁸⁷ Aston, *Lollards and Reformers*, 85.

¹⁸⁸ Stacey, *John Wyclif and Reform*, 87; See: Section 3.3

¹⁸⁹ Stacey, *John Wyclif and Reform*, 102. However, many of Wycliffe's earliest followers were his fellow academics, meaning many were educated.

¹⁹⁰ Stacey, *John Wyclif and Reform*, 102.

¹⁹¹ Spinka, *John Hus: A Biography*, 133.

hierarchy as a tool of the ‘antichrist’ pope who was actively attempting to subvert the true church and impede its members from salvation.¹⁹⁴ In *De ecclesia*, Hus argued ‘that the true church was the invisible community of the saved,’¹⁹⁵ who needed to follow the instructions of the Bible to achieve salvation.¹⁹⁶ Russell shows that Hus, again in *De ecclesia*, argues ‘that the papacy should be rejected; nonbiblical and nonapostolic; it had begun only in the fourth century under the patronage of the Roman emperors.’¹⁹⁷

To Hus, all the trappings that had been added to the religion by the papacy had erected an insurmountable impediment in regards to salvation.¹⁹⁸ Hus opposed not only the trappings of the Catholic Church, he also called for the divestment of ecclesiastical wealth. As Russell shows, like other reforming movements, Hus drew heavily on biblical examples of the poverty of Christ and the Apostles to justify this divestment.¹⁹⁹

4.2.6.3. Early Quakers

The Early Quakers believed they were inheritors of the beliefs and practices of the primitive Christian church. As outlined by Spencer²⁰⁰ and Gwyn,²⁰¹ the Early Quakers tied their own conversion experiences and creation of a new (or, as they believed, rediscovered) system of practices to the experiences of the first apostles of Christ.²⁰² The Early Quakers believed that in them was the same spirit of God that had inspired the early apostles.²⁰³ It

¹⁹² Schaff, *John Huss: His Life*, 87.

¹⁹³ Spinka, *John Hus: A Biography*, 133.

¹⁹⁴ Schaff, *John Huss: His Life*, 23.

¹⁹⁵ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 92.

¹⁹⁶ Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, 606

¹⁹⁷ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 92.

¹⁹⁸ Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, 608-609.

¹⁹⁹ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 101.

²⁰⁰ Spencer, *Holiness: The Soul of Quakerism*, 18-22

²⁰¹ Gwyn, *Apocalypse of the Word*, 72.

²⁰² Spencer, *Holiness: The Soul of Quakerism*, 6; Gwyn, *Apocalypse of the Word*, 72. See: Section 2.5.11.

²⁰³ Spencer, *Holiness: The Soul of Quakerism*, 31-31.

was this spirit that moved them to disrupt sermons by ‘hireling priests,’ to refuse to swear oaths, and to walk through the streets declaring that the kingdom of Christ was coming to the world.²⁰⁴ As Moore,²⁰⁵ Spencer,²⁰⁶ and Gwyn²⁰⁷ show, by relying on the Scripture’s descriptions of the Early Church, Early Quakers structured their society to emulate the manner in which Christ and his Apostles practiced their faith. These interpretations led them to the rejection of sacraments and a paid clergy, of the paying of tithes, and of doctrinal dictates from the Established Church authorities.²⁰⁸

The Early Quakers’ identification with the primitive church is also reflected in their view of suffering.²⁰⁹ As Moore discusses, the Quakers ‘developed the idea that their suffering was a part of God’s plan, so that Quaker faith and Quaker experience of persecution were found to reinforce each other, instead of being opposed.’²¹⁰ Quakers knew that they were united with Christ, and as their study of the Scriptures confirmed, Christ himself had suffered, and had stated that ‘the Kingdom of God would not come without a period of great tribulation for the church.’²¹¹ Early Quakers viewed their own persecution and suffering as the same test of faith and conviction that Christ and his early followers experienced; indeed, they viewed it as a privilege to be forced to endure something akin to that suffered by their Lord.²¹²

²⁰⁴ Fox, *Journal of George Fox*, 146.

²⁰⁵ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 52-54.

²⁰⁶ Spencer, *Holiness: The Soul of Quakerism*, 15.

²⁰⁷ Gwyn, *Apocalypse of the Word*, 72.

²⁰⁸ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 65-66.

²⁰⁹ See: Section 2.5.5

²¹⁰ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 160.

²¹¹ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 160.

²¹² Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 160.

Early Quakers also emulated the primitive church through the traveling ministry known as ‘the Lambs War.’²¹³ Like Wycliffe, the Early Quakers sent pairs of itinerant preachers into the countryside to spread the Quaker message. These pairs were comprised of both men and women who had gone through a conversion experience of their own and had been brought into the light of Quaker belief.²¹⁴

4.2.6.4. Conclusion

The QWH, in rejecting the traditions of the Established Churches, were attempting to emulate the primitive church, as scripturally evidenced. They ultimately sought to create a society of believers who were the true church, marked by their rejection of Established Churches’ hierarchy and dogmas. To this end, the QWH strove to emulate the example set by Christ and his apostles by advocating ecclesiastical poverty, promoting the equality of believers, espousing a community of converted believers, and recognizing the presence of Christ in the form of the Holy Spirit. This attempt at a revitalization of the primitive church was the foundation of the QWH’s reforming tendencies.

4.2.7. Reforming Tendencies

The QWH sought to reform the Church, seeking to change those aspects that they felt were hindrances to salvation. For the QWH, the Established Churches had strayed far from their responsibility to shepherd men’s souls to salvation. As explained above, the QWH sought to create a visible church that was based on the examples provided by Scripture.²¹⁵ They rejected the various traditions that had been created and promulgated by the established authorities, viewing them as the cause of the evils that plagued the faithful.

²¹³ See: Section 2.5.6

²¹⁴ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 25-28, 125.

²¹⁵ Section 4.2.6

4.2.7.1. Wycliffe

For Wycliffe, the belief in personal salvation, biblical authority, and a rejection of Catholic tradition resulted in an effort at reform based on individuals' ability to read the Scriptures for themselves,²¹⁶ moral and locally placed parish priests,²¹⁷ individual responsibility for one's own salvation,²¹⁸ and the apostolic ideal of poverty. Wycliffe rejected the Church's stance on transubstantiation,²¹⁹ on the insistence on the use of only Latin or Greek for church services and business,²²⁰ and on the existence of monastic communities.²²¹

Until 1378, Wycliffe wanted to reform the Catholic Church to eliminate the immoral clerics by deposing them from their properties, which, according to him, were a source of corruption.²²² In 1378, Wycliffe began a more radical reform movement attacking the papacy's authority. He opposed the dogmas of the Catholic Church by affirming that Christ and the Bible alone were the only authority for a true believer.²²³ This basic principle was carefully worked out in *De Veritate Sacrae Scripturae (On the Truth of the Holy Scriptures)*.²²⁴ Wycliffe asserts and defends the absolute superiority of the scriptural doctrine over scholastic theology or the assertion of papal supremacy in all matters of faith and practice. For him:

‘Holy Scripture is the highest authority for every Christian and the standard of faith and of all human perfection.’ The Bible alone is the supreme organ of divine revelation; the Church's tradition, pronouncements of the councils, papal decrees, and all other expositions of Christian doctrine must be tested on

²¹⁶ Stacey, *John Wyclif and Reform*, 276.

²¹⁷ Schaff, *John Huss: His Life*, 107.

²¹⁸ Schaff, *John Huss: His Life*, 109.

²¹⁹ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 89.

²²⁰ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 92.

²²¹ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 92.

²²² Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, 608.

²²³ Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, 496.

²²⁴ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 92.

the Scriptural touchstone. All truth is contained in the Scriptures. ...This doctrine was basic to all Wycliffe's subsequent thought, and furnished him with a locus standi from which he could judge the monstrous abuses of the existing ecclesiastical practice.²²⁵

Wycliffe's doctrine challenged the underpinnings of both religious and civil society in the late medieval era.²²⁶ The prevailing belief in Wycliffe's time was that the priests and the Pope were intermediaries between each layperson and God. Similar to the feudal concept of lord and serf, Church doctrine taught that the Pope was the 'lord' of all spiritual 'property,' which was given out to the laity via the priests, acting as his tenants-in-chief.²²⁷ Wycliffe dismissed these doctrines and stated that the Church is not the intermediary between God and humans, but that each man was directly and personally responsible to God.²²⁸

Wycliffe's characteristic theory, his main intellectual lever for the reform of the Church, was that of dominion by grace. ...The novelty of Wycliffe's theory was that it discarded the idea of mediate dominion of ownership, and not merely with regard to spiritual powers, but temporal possessions. He taught that all dominion, power or ownership, came from God and that every man was His tenant-in-chief, owing no vassalage to any mense tenant.²²⁹

Wycliffe sought to replace the existing hierarchy with 'poor priests', who lived in poverty, were bound by no vows, received no formal consecration, and preached the Gospel.²³⁰ These itinerant preachers went two-by-two, barefoot, wearing long dark-red robes and carrying a staff in hand, the latter having symbolic reference to their pastoral calling, preaching the sovereignty of God.²³¹ Both Lambert²³² and Aston²³³ note that Wycliffe most likely did not

²²⁵ Spinka, *Advocates of Reform from Wyclif to Erasmus*, 26–27.

²²⁶ Schaff, *John Huss: His Life*, 103.

²²⁷ Poole, *Wycliffe and Movements for Reform*, 92.

²²⁸ Poole, *Wycliffe and Movements for Reform*, 92–93.

²²⁹ Deansley, *The Lollard Bible*, 226–227.

²³⁰ See: Section 3.2

²³¹ Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, (3rd edition), 264.

²³² Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 232

²³³ Aston, *Lollards and Reformers*, 15.

directly organize his group of ‘poor preachers’, but that ‘the indirect responsibility for these devotional travelers is, equally decidedly, his.’²³⁴

4.2.7.2. Hus

Hus drew from Wycliffe’s beliefs, modifying them to fit with his own native Bohemian reformist movement. As Schaff²³⁵ and Spinka²³⁶ show, Hus agreed with Wycliffe on the points of apostolic poverty, locally placed parish priests, biblical authority and personal salvation, and translation of Scripture into a vernacular tongue.²³⁷ Hus took a different reformist path than Wycliffe on the issue of transubstantiation and he subscribed to the Bohemian reform movement’s insistence on the practice of the Eucharist in both kinds.²³⁸

The central importance of Hus’ native Bohemian form of worship, Utraquism, in shaping Hus’ theology is discussed in Chapter 3.²³⁹ It also greatly influenced the direction his supporters’ reforming tendencies would take after his death.²⁴⁰ Utraquism was, as posited by Fudge, ‘the single most important, though by no means only, aspect of this reforming movement...the recovery of sacramental piety linked to lay participation in the Eucharist.’²⁴¹

One effect of Utraquism was a spiritual leveling between the laity and clergy, which also informed Hus’ views on reform. In Bohemia ‘lay people and religious [were] standing on level ground, together participating in the community of God with humankind.’²⁴² For many Czech theologians, Utraquism emulated the earliest form of Christian worship and was therefore closer the true church than Catholic practice, and they actively supported reforms

²³⁴ Aston, *Lollards and Reformers*, 15.

²³⁵ Schaff, *John Huss: His Life*, 103.

²³⁶ Spinka, *John Hus: A Biography*, 177.

²³⁷ Spinka, *John Hus: A Biography*, 19.

²³⁸ Schaff, *John Huss: His Life*, 103.

²³⁹ See: Section 3.3.4.

²⁴⁰ Fudge, *The Crusade against Heretics in Bohemia, 1418–1437*, 13.

²⁴¹ Fudge, *The Crusade against Heretics in Bohemia, 1418–1437*, 1.

²⁴² Ozment, *The Age of Reform*, 201.

that would return the church to its true form.²⁴³ As Fudge states, ‘this communing created social identity, religious reality and in so doing provided the catalyst for reform. Eventually, the implications of Eucharist renewal produced social and theological revolution,’²⁴⁴ which would align the Hussite movement with more widely held Bohemian reformist tendencies.

Another practice that Hus railed against was simony, viewing this as one of the chief distractions for the clergy from their spiritual duties.²⁴⁵ A Hussite preacher named Konrad was known ‘to [use] the sharp thorn of the Word against the simony of the clergy, and especially of the monks, and arraigned them for commending spurious relics.’²⁴⁶ For Hus, simony marked the depths of Rome’s apostasy.²⁴⁷

4.2.7.3. Early Quakers

By analyzing the information presented in Chapter 2, the Early Quaker reform agenda can be seen as being based on four principles: (1) Christ as a present reality, (2) Christ’s accessibility to all, (3) the distinction between the temporal and spiritual churches, and (4) the rejection of the need for a distinct, paid, and educated clergy.

First, as to Christ as a present reality, the Early Quakers believed that, in addition to being risen and ‘seated at the right hand of the Father in heaven,’ Christ is here, in the presence of the Holy Spirit, able to be accessed personally.²⁴⁸ Christ told his followers, ‘I am with you always, even to the end of the world.’²⁴⁹ Early Quakers looked to John 1:4, ‘In Him was life, and the life was the light of men,’ as proof of Christ’s presence within each

²⁴³ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 101.

²⁴⁴ Fudge, *The Crusade against Heretics in Bohemia, 1418–1437*, 14.

²⁴⁵ Schaff, *John Huss: His Life*, 58.

²⁴⁶ Schaff, *John Huss: His Life*, 29.

²⁴⁷ Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, 625.

²⁴⁸ See: Section 2.5.7 and 2.5.8.

²⁴⁹ Matthew 28:20.

individual.²⁵⁰ To permit unhindered communication with the Holy Spirit, Early Quakers found it necessary to reject impediments, such as temporal traditions and dogmas, in favor of the Apostles recording of the Word.²⁵¹

Second, Christ's accessibility necessitated a new mode of worship, unmediated by priests or dogmatic tradition. Early Quakers sought to create a spiritual community where each individual has accepted the presence of the Holy Spirit in the form of the 'Light within.'²⁵² For Early Quakers, a 'Christian' was not someone who had his name on a church membership list or who had done something religious.²⁵³ Rather, the mark of an authentic Christian is the changed life experienced upon accepting the reality of Christ's presence in the here and now, someone who has been transformed from death to life in a firsthand encounter with Christ.²⁵⁴

Third, the principle that there exists a distinction between the temporal and spiritual churches informed Early Quakers' view of the physical presence of the Church. For them, the Church was not a building, physical space, or structure.²⁵⁵ Neither could it be identified with the ecclesiastical hierarchy, human tradition, or with a state-established institution.²⁵⁶ The Church is the fellowship of people whose lives have been changed by Christ and in whose hearts Christ lives, a spiritual community gathered together to work toward salvation for all its members.²⁵⁷ This led the Early Quakers to be iconoclastic and to oppose any form

²⁵⁰ John 1:4.

²⁵¹ Gwyn, *Apocalypse of the Word*, 97.

²⁵² Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 225.

²⁵³ Gwyn, *Apocalypse of the Word*, 97.

²⁵⁴ Spencer, *Holiness: The Soul of Quakerism*, 18-22.

²⁵⁵ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 127.

²⁵⁶ Gwyn, *Apocalypse of the Word*, 42-44.

²⁵⁷ Spencer, *Holiness: The Soul of Quakerism*, 18-20.

of ceremony.²⁵⁸ Thus, they changed or completely removed ornate aspects found in the church buildings, and some went so far as to disrupt church services.²⁵⁹

Finally, rejection of hireling priests led Early Quakers to understand that a minister is one who serves Christ and who makes Christ real to others, not one whose ambition is to accumulate wealth and power. Fox stated, ‘Teachers, Prophets, Shepherds, Elders and Bishops they must not be such as are given to *filthy lucre, nor covetous, nor given to wine...*[and] must be turned away from.’²⁶⁰ Instead, for Early Quakers, ‘true Praying must be in the Spirit, and the true worshipping, true Praising, and the true Singing must be in the *Spirit* so they that *grieve* and *quench* the *Spirit* cannot *Pray*, cannot *Sing*, cannot *Worship* God in the *Spirit*.’²⁶¹

²⁵⁸ Gwyn, *Seeker's Found*, 302-303.

²⁵⁹ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 129-131.

²⁶⁰ Fox, ‘XIV. Concerning Teachers, Prophets, Shepherds, Bishops, Elders, &c.’ in *Some Principles*.

Fox expanded on this subject, stating:

Teachers, Prophets, Shepherds, Elders and Bishops they must not be such as are given to *filthy lucre, nor covetous, nor given to wine* they must not be *strikers, nor brawlers, nor seekers of Earthly things*; they must not *teach for filthy lucre, nor be covetous*, nor strive about words, nor use *Fables*, nor *Philosophy*, nor the *worlds Rudiments*, nor *Traditions*, nor *Doctrins of men*, nor their *Ordinances*; they must not compel their People to *observe Dayes, Meats, Drinks*, and such like things; they must not *bear rule by their means*, nor such as *seek for their gain from their Quarter*, for such are forbid; and such as *teach for money* and pieces of bread, and such as taught for Gain were forbid, and witnessed against by the true Prophets and Teachers, and Apostles.

And such as *wear long Robes*, and are called of men *Master*, and *love Salutations in Markets, uppermost Rooms at Feats*; such as *follow and Love* those things are out of Christs Doctrine, against such he poured forth *Woes*, who said, *you have one Master even Christ, and ye are all Brethren*, and that it should not be among them, as it was among the *Gentiles*.

And so all they that have the *Scriptures of Christ*, the *Apostles*, and *Prophets*, and are not in the Power and Spirit which gave them forth; and hearken not to that which doth reprove them, by which they should come into it, but stop their Ears and close their Eyes to it, these are like the *Pharisees*, these cannot *Worship* God in *Spirit*, these cannot *Pray* in *Spirit*, nor *Sing* in the *Spirit*, but *quench* it, and *grieve* it, and *vex* it; these are out of the *Fellowship* in the *Spirit*, and without God the Father of spirits; These *Err not knowing the Scriptures nor the Power of God*, such go abroad to change their Way, go from the Spirit and Light in their own hearts, which should lead them to Christ the *living Way*, and the *Truth*; so all such as have the *Form of Godliness*, and *not in the Power and Spirit* which they were in which gave forth the words, such must be turned away from.

²⁶¹ Fox, ‘XIV. Concerning Teachers, Prophets, Shepherds, Bishops, Elders, &c.’ in *Some Principles*.

4.2.7.4. Conclusion

The desire to establish the true church was at the heart of the QWH's reforming tendencies, driving them to reject the Established Churches' authority. The QWH effectively elevated the entire Church community to the status of clergy, thus eliminating the laity, who now became responsible for their own salvation.²⁶² A belief in the availability of Christ's saving grace to every person and of the apostasy of the Established Churches caused Fox, Hus, and Wycliffe to attempt to reform and, eventually, separate themselves (and their followers) from the Established Churches, in an attempt to recreate a church in the mold of that which the Apostles described in the Bible and to realize the 'invisible community of the saved.'

4.2.8. Imminence of Christ's Return

The QWH believed that Christ's return to Earth to save the faithful and punish the wicked, was an imminent occurrence. They viewed it not as some distant future event, but as a reality coming within a generation or two, perhaps even within their own lifetime.²⁶³ Thus, preparations for Christ's return—from reforms of the church to restructuring of society—became one of the defining characteristics of the three movements.

The emphasis the QWH placed on the accessibility of Christ and his message, specifically his radical re-altering of societal and religious boundaries, was at the core of their respective eschatologies. It was not unusual for any Christian to have the return of Christ at the forefront of her mind. However, the QWH's insistence that it was imminent infused the QWH with an intensity of action in attempting to remove any impediments to Christ's return. This intensity of spiritual and secular preparation was recognized by both supporters and

²⁶² Belloc, *The Great Heresies*, 85.

²⁶³ Ozment, *The Age of Reform*, 192.

detractors of the individual movements and helped to establish the boundaries separating the QWH from their fellow Christians. The QWH perceived this intensity as a hallmark of an individual who had accepted the truth, marking him as a member of the Universal Church and on the path to salvation. However, each of the respective QWH movements had its own understanding of what was required to prepare for this momentous event. Moreover, the Early Quakers moved from a belief in the imminent physical return of Christ to a belief that He had already come again, not physically, but in the Inward Light in every individual.

4.2.8.1. Wycliffe

Wycliffe wrote extensively on the subject of Christ's return and the need to prepare this physical event.²⁶⁴ Russell outlines how Wycliffe spoke on the role of secular and religious powers and argued, with scriptural support, that the Prince could and should hold the dominion of property for the church, a radical and active change in the structure of the society.²⁶⁵ Wycliffe believed that removal of property from the Catholic authorities could set the stage for Christ's return by reestablishing a church with diffused control ascribing to the ideal of 'apostolic poverty.'²⁶⁶

Wycliffe's belief that the Pope had become the Antichrist²⁶⁷ was significant to Wycliffe's view of the imminence of Christ's return, inasmuch as the Book of Revelations stated the coming of the Antichrist was one of the final signals heralding that return.²⁶⁸ Thus, Wycliffe's equation of the papal office to the Antichrist was one visible sign of the coming of Christ to save those who remained faithful to the Gospel message and were a part of the

²⁶⁴ Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, 8, 606

²⁶⁵ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 92.

²⁶⁶ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 91.

²⁶⁷ See: Section 3.2.

²⁶⁸ Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, 327.

‘Universal Church.’²⁶⁹ As Ozment argues, the itinerant preachers dispatched by Wycliffe preached that without a proper understanding of Christ’s teachings found within the Gospels, one could not be saved and would face eternal damnation on the rapidly approaching day of reckoning.²⁷⁰

4.2.8.2. Hus

Hus also firmly believed in the imminent return of Christ, borrowing and expanding on Wycliffe’s theories on the relationship between church and state, between the laity and the clergy, and between Rome and the national churches. Like Wycliffe, Hus viewed the apostasy of the papacy as a sign of Christ’s imminent return.²⁷¹

As Ozment shows, because of the different circumstances of time and place, Hussites felt the need to take the Wycliffite ideal of changing society one step further and use temporal force and violence to promote the changes they perceived as necessary to prepare society for the Christ’s return.²⁷² Hus believed in the use of arms to defend the reformed society from outside papal and imperial influence.²⁷³ This violence was another sign to Hus of Christ’s return, because the Book of Revelations discusses how the Beast will use various means to attack the true church.²⁷⁴

²⁶⁹ Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, 531-540.

²⁷⁰ Ozment, *The Age of Reform*, 165.

²⁷¹ Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, 679-683.

²⁷² Ozment, *The Age of Reform*, 165.

²⁷³ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 92. Hussites, by combining their notions of Czech nationalism with Wycliffe’s and Hus’ writings on the relationship between the church and state, were able to justify the use of force in protecting the Universal Church from ‘foreign’ aggressors bent on reestablishing a version of faith Hus believed would send them back down the path of damnation. Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 93

²⁷⁴ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 92.

4.2.8.3. Early Quakers

Many 17th-century sects believed ‘that the second coming of Christ is a future temporal event, and either before it, or after it, there will be a thousand-year period during which the saints will rule,’²⁷⁵ and that they were a part of the vanguard of saints participating in the Second Coming. Some followed the view of John Owen, ‘who taught a spiritual doctrine...[that] saw the gathered churches...as harbingers of Christ’s return,’²⁷⁶ working to create an atmosphere conducive to the Second Coming. Up to the restoration of the monarchy in 1660, the Early Quakers were deeply influenced by this apocalyptic outlook, believing that they were actively participating in the creation of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth.²⁷⁷

Early Quakers looked at the events of the Civil War and Interregnum, with the overthrow of the monarchy and installation of a religiously plural parliament, as the first step toward the creation of a secular society prepared for Christ’s return.²⁷⁸ Moore,²⁷⁹ Spencer,²⁸⁰ and Gwyn²⁸¹ all outline how Early Quakers believed that they were in the vanguard of Christ’s saved, helping to pave the way for his return with the actions such as the ‘Lamb’s War.’ Punshon shows that, when the monarchy was restored in 1660, many sects, including the Early Quakers, believed that they had been dealt a setback and that the joyous day of Christ’s return was delayed. This caused some groups, such as the Fifth Monarchy Men, to attempt to remove the impediment to Christ’s return, namely the restored King Charles II.²⁸²

²⁷⁵ Punshon, *Portrait in Grey*, 32.

²⁷⁶ Punshon, *Portrait in Grey*, 32.

²⁷⁷ Ozment, *The Age of Reform*, 295.

²⁷⁸ Punshon, *Portrait in Grey*, 55.

²⁷⁹ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 64-66.

²⁸⁰ Spencer, *Holiness: The Soul of Quakerism*, 17-18.

²⁸¹ Gwyn, *Apocalypse of the Word*, 30-33.

²⁸² Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 178-179.

The radical changes, both spiritual and personal, experienced by many Early Quakers were so often intense and dramatic. Gwynn argues that the nature of the conversion experience, in which they felt the personal presence of Christ within, allowed the Quakers to develop the theory of a ‘realized eschatology,’ where the events described in the Book of Revelations were played out within an individual’s spirit, not in the temporal world.²⁸³ Punshon agrees, arguing that Early Quakers taught that Christ’s return was not imminent, for he was (and always had been) present in the soul of each member of the true church, accessible to all who turned toward his Light within.²⁸⁴ The move toward the creation of the theological belief in a ‘realized eschatology,’ when combined with the belief of the ‘Light of God’ in every person, led the early Quakers to declare that Christ had already come to Earth, His presence could be discerned all around them, and that the Christ’s return was a very real experience available to all.²⁸⁵

4.2.8.4. Conclusion

The belief in the imminence of Christ’s return and the fear of failure to prepare properly for it drove the QWH to work tirelessly to try to open society’s eyes to the path to salvation.²⁸⁶ Through personal study aimed at understanding the Bible, the QWH sought to discern the true nature of the Universal Church, whose gathering was a prerequisite of Christ’s return. For the QWH, the signs of Christ’s return were obvious, making it vitally important to bring about those reforms so that the community of the faithful would be ready to greet their Lord and Savior upon his return.²⁸⁷ Even after Early Quakers began to see the

²⁸³ Spencer, *Holiness: The Soul of Quakerism*, 17-18.

²⁸⁴ Punshon, *Portrait in Grey*, 55.

²⁸⁵ Punshon, , *Portrait in Grey*, 55.

²⁸⁶ Vann, *The Social Development of English Quakerism*, 89.

²⁸⁷ Spencer, ‘Holiness: The Quaker Way to Perfection,’ 153.

return as a spiritual one that took place in each individual, they worked to prepare and maintain themselves and their community as one with the Christ truly present.

4.2.9. Role of Women

The openness of Christ's message and its availability to all directly influenced the social agenda pursued by the QWH. One area in which this played out was the role of women within each movement. The traditional role of women in the Established Churches was that of submission and subservience to men.²⁸⁸ Women could not be trusted with their own salvation, needing the calm, steady hand of an educated man to teach and lead them without a word of hesitation.²⁸⁹ The only path of religious expression open to women was that of the convent, where they were still under the control of the all-male papal hierarchy.²⁹⁰ The QWH rejected this view of women and put them on equal footing with men.

4.2.9.1. Wycliffe

Wycliffe's views on women separated him from most of the rest of society in his time. As shown by Holt, 'Wycliffe's opinion of women was rather higher than that of most men in his day. He thought them frail articles, yet not therefore to be despised, but to be cared for and to have allowances made for them.'²⁹¹ He viewed 'Women to be of short wit, but folly and lusts of men be more often to blame than women.'²⁹² As Aston notes:

Wycliffe made some passing remarks about female ministrants in *De potestat pape*. These asides appeared as part of his argument that priestly orders were all of equal

²⁸⁸ Mack, *Visionary Women*, 16-44.

²⁸⁹ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 94.

²⁹⁰ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 94. Women were also viewed by many of the church fathers as nothing more than a temptation to lure them away from God's presence with their seductive natures. David Aers, 'Brut's Theology of the Sacrament of the Altar,' in *Lollards and Their Influence*, ed. Fiona Somerset, Jill C. Havens, and Derrick G. Pitard, 115. This meant the women had to be kept at arm's length from those seeking to be pure in the eyes of the Lord.

²⁹¹ Emily Sarah Holt, *John de Wycliffe, the first of the reformers, and what he did for England* (London, UK: John F. Shaw and Co., 1884) 187.

²⁹² Holt, *John de Wycliffe*, 187.

authority, so that a simple priest (*simplex sacerdos*) was on a par with bishop or pope in his ministry of sacraments. The papal office resided in virtue, not rank, and anyone—in theory even a layman—could be pope. Christ had given the simple priest all necessary powers, and in case of need a layman was able to baptize.²⁹³

Wycliffe was pointing out that Christ had not restricted the powers of the pope to the office itself or a specific person, but to any virtuous person, particularly when the elected holder of those powers was abusing them. However, Aston argues that Wycliffe's view of women priests was 'strictly academic [in the] nature of the context. Wycliffe was *not* discussing women priests as such; he was using this hypothetical contingency to counter possible objections to his view of the priesthood.'²⁹⁴ Nevertheless, she notes Wycliffe's statement 'that if a layman could baptize he was capable of administering the other sacraments, so that God could impart not only to a layman but to a woman or other irrational person.'²⁹⁵

Regardless of Wycliffe's personal views on women and their state of mind, his statements inspired others to view favorably the position of women in the True Church, as shown below. This favorable view represented a point of correspondence amongst the QWH. Ultimately, Hus and the Early Quakers developed a view as to the place of women and their equality with men consistent with the spirit of Wycliffe's writings and of his followers, rather than with the reality of Wycliffe's actions.

The writings of Walter Brut, an early Wycliffite, illuminate Lollardy's views on women. As explained by Aers,²⁹⁶ 'Brut acknowledges that his theology of the sacrament and his related understanding of priesthood have consequences that [went] against the deeply rooted misogyny of his culture and the Church.'²⁹⁷ Brut formulates his 'affirmative answers

²⁹³ Aston, *Lollards and Reformers*, 68.

²⁹⁴ Aston, *Lollards and Reformers*, 68.

²⁹⁵ Aston, *Lollards and Reformers*, 68.

²⁹⁶ Aers, 'Brut's Theology of the Sacrament of the Altar,' 115–126.

²⁹⁷ Aers, 'Brut's Theology of the Sacrament of the Altar,' 125.

to the questions of women's power and authority in the ministry' from his unique theological positions, including his 'his rejection of transubstantiation... [and] his rejection of the view that priests immolate Christ on the altar.'²⁹⁸

Brut showed that 'the church allows women to administer the sacrament of baptism (in emergencies), the gateway to all other sacraments and, according to the Church's teaching, the only one necessary to salvation,'²⁹⁹ thus revealing inconsistencies in the Church's own teachings and proving that God's power, through baptism, can come through a woman. Brut placed a 'high valuation [on] preaching... which he says women have certainly done, converting many when priests did not dare speak the word,'³⁰⁰ thereby proving women's ability to maintain their faith in the most difficult circumstances. He also perceived the Church's argument that 'God's power works through even the most sinful [male] priest consecrating the bread,'³⁰¹ as proof that the individual is not as important as the power of God. Ultimately, 'Brut feels unable to say that Christ cannot or will not consecrate through holy women,' justifying the position that women have the same spiritual legitimacy as men.³⁰²

Some Lollard thinkers, such as Hawisia Mone, went even further to a 'version of the priesthood of all believers... one that finally dissolved boundaries between male and female, and between priest and lay person in Christian discipleship,'³⁰³ a spiritual community of equals. In such a community, as Mone states, 'Every man and woman being in good life out of sin is good priest and hath as much power of God in all things as any priest ordered be he

²⁹⁸ Aers, 'Brut's Theology of the Sacrament of the Altar,' 125.

²⁹⁹ Aers, 'Brut's Theology of the Sacrament of the Altar,' 125.

³⁰⁰ Aers, 'Brut's Theology of the Sacrament of the Altar,' 125.

³⁰¹ Aers, 'Brut's Theology of the Sacrament of the Altar,' 125.

³⁰² Aers, 'Brut's Theology of the Sacrament of the Altar,' 126.

³⁰³ Aers, 'Brut's Theology of the Sacrament of the Altar,' 126.

pope or bishop,³⁰⁴ a statement that finds echoes in the Hussite and Quaker views of women and ministry.

4.2.9.2. Hus

Hus' view of women was similar to that of Wycliffe's followers. Using the same arguments, Hus believed that 'laymen and even women may baptize' in cases of necessity, such as delivering the 'baptismal grace [that] delivers from all pain of hell in purgatory, so that in the case the baptized child die, incurring no post-baptismal sin, it goes immediately to heaven.'³⁰⁵ He contended that the right to remit sins lay solely with God, not the pope or educated clergy.³⁰⁶

The Hussite belief in equality extended beyond that of laymen and clergy to that of men and women.³⁰⁷ By placing the onus of salvation on the individual and community (not the actions of the clergy), Hus, like Wycliffe and the Early Quakers, also increased the profile of women in the community. By working to build a community tied together through spiritual bonds, Hus created a situation in which women not only had the opportunity to participate in the spiritual life of the community, they had a responsibility to do so.³⁰⁸

4.2.9.3. Early Quakers

Early Quakers viewed women as constituting a vital and integral part of the movement.³⁰⁹ As Tarter outlines, women held important positions throughout the early

³⁰⁴ Aers, 'Brut's Theology of the Sacrament of the Altar,' 126, quoting from *Heresy Trials in the Diocese of Norwich*.

³⁰⁵ Schaff, *John Huss: His Life*, 129.

³⁰⁶ Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, 676.

³⁰⁷ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 83.

³⁰⁸ For more on the role of women in the Hussite movement, see: John M. Klassen *Warring Maidens, Captive Wives and Hussite Queens: Women and Men at War and at Peace in Fifteenth Century Bohemia*. (Boulder, CO: East European Monographs, 1999).

³⁰⁹ Such as Martha Simmonds. See: Chapter 2.

Quaker organization, and the views of women such as Margaret Fell were held as being equal to those of men.³¹⁰

The first public demonstration of Quaker theology was, as explained in Chapter 2, during the period of the ‘Valiant Sixty,’ or what has become known as ‘The Lamb’s War.’ Mack extensively shows how women participated in the ‘Lamb’s War,’ traveling the country side-by-side with men and preaching the truth in Fox’s message.³¹¹ The ‘traveling ministry’ resulted in many female Early Quakers traveling abroad to such places as the American Colonies and the Vatican, giving women the opportunity to suffer through and survive the same hardships as their male companions.³¹²

These two facets of Early Quakerism—women’s holding of important positions and their participation in the traveling ministry—demonstrated to the general public (and some skeptical members of the Early Quaker male leadership) that women did not need to be locked up and cloistered away so as to be avoided. The Early Quakers espoused a spiritual community that did not, like Wycliffe, hold the ‘idea...that a good woman was merely a woman who had never been tempted to evil, and that female virtue of any kind was a poet’s dream.’³¹³ Instead, by providing women an opening for spiritual participation, women were proving themselves as hardy and as ready to face new challenges as men. They were vindicating the belief, inspired by Wycliffe and Hus, in the ability of any layperson to participate in a communion with God via the Inward Light.

³¹⁰ Tarter, ‘Go North!’ 88-89 and Tarter, ‘Quaking in the Light’, 145-151.

³¹¹ Mack, *Visionary Women*, 255-261.

³¹² Spencer, *Holiness: The Soul of Quakerism*, 22-23.

³¹³ Holt, *John de Wycliffe*, 187.

Critics used incidents, such as those involving James Nayler and his female followers,³¹⁴ and ecstatic participation in meetings for worship,³¹⁵ as examples of religious excess and an inability to control women's emotions. However, women continued to play leading roles in Quaker society, remaining on the forefront of the establishment of a Quaker identity by supporting those who were persecuted through their organizing and running the Meeting for Suffering and Women's Meetings, by participating in the traveling ministries, and by educating Quaker youth, as well as by providing support services for the larger community as needs arose.³¹⁶

The Quaker view of women was radically different from the rest of English society and was an outgrowth of the Quaker belief that every person has a measure of the Light of God within.³¹⁷ Although some male Quaker leaders, such as Edward Burroughs,³¹⁸ held onto their inherited societal prejudices against woman, the generally accepted view of Early Quakers was that women had equal access to the Light inside them, and therefore had the same rights within the spiritual community.³¹⁹ To Douglas Gwyn, this was 'probably the most profound [example of] social re-ordering within early Quakerism,' and it set them distinctly apart from English society as a whole.³²⁰

As Quakerism moved out of its first stage and became more codified and cohesive, the belief in providing women a space and role within the larger society led to the creation of separate Meetings for Worship for women and men.³²¹ Although this separation seems

³¹⁴ Mack, *Visionary Women*, 258-259 and Tarter, 'Quaking in the Light', 151.

³¹⁵ Dandelion, *The Liturgies of Quakerism*, 40.

³¹⁶ For more discussion on the transformation of the role of women within the Quaker movement, see: Mack, Chapter 9, 'The Mystical Housewife,' in *Visionary Women*, 305-350.

³¹⁷ Reay, *The Quakers and the English Revolution*, 26.

³¹⁸ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 125.

³¹⁹ Gwyn, *Apocalypse of the Word*, 35.

³²⁰ Gwyn, *Apocalypse of the Word*, 35.

³²¹ Mack, *Visionary Women*, 265-304; Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 227.

somewhat archaic from today's perspective, at the time it was viewed as remarkably progressive and, in some quarters outside the Society, as dangerous.³²² The traditional role of women, as described above, provided little room for a woman's religious experience or expressions and was based on the notion that no woman could not be entrusted with their own salvation. Based on their belief in the accessibility of Christ's message, the Early Quakers concluded that women had not only the capability but the duty to ensure their own salvation.³²³ With the creation of the Women's Meetings and other actions, even as they transitioned to the less charismatic second period, Quakers created spaces where women could actively participate in and control their own religious experience, maintaining the spirit of Wycliffe, Hus, and the Early Quakers.³²⁴

4.2.9.4. Conclusion

For the QWH, the role of women in their respective movements was radical and at odds with the views held by the Established Churches, other sects, and secular society. While it is impossible to accurately know and describe the exact role women played in society, it is clear that the QWH, using their own interpretations of the Bible and the message of the Holy Spirit, broke free of the traditional views and created new opportunities for women to participate in the religious experience, often on equal footing with men. Although Wycliffe did not act on this notion of equality to the same extent as Hus and the Early Quakers—which may be reflective of the greater strictures on women in the late 14th century—he, like his own followers, recognized that women shared a degree of spiritual equality with men.

³²² Mack, *Visionary Women*, 287-293.

³²³ Tarter, 'Go North!' 88-89.

³²⁴ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 125, 140.

4.3. Chapter Conclusion

As shown above, the QWH shared many characteristics. Although other sects also shared some of them, they formed a constellation in the QWH, creating a strong correspondence. Fundamental to this correspondence were the ideals of personal salvation, communal worship, and freedom from Catholic authorities to practice the community's agreed-upon form of worship. Having concluded that the Established Church authorities were irretrievably corrupted, the QWH sought to strengthen the connection between the individual and God. Distrusting the accumulated human traditions that infected the Established Churches, the QWH looked to the Bible for inspiration in forming a religious community that would foster salvation, rather than impeding it.

The QWH were each products of the time and place in which they arose, modifying certain aspects of their belief and practice to fit their respective circumstances. For instance, whereas Hus drew much from Wycliffe, he did not accept Wycliffe's rejection of transubstantiation in the Eucharist, because this was an important part of the Bohemian Church's form of worship. The Quakers went further, rejecting the Eucharist along with a larger set of traditions that were not needed to ensure salvation.³²⁵ Despite these differences, each group followed the same path to reach those outcomes, namely rejection of human tradition in favor of biblical authority, personal interpretation of the Bible, an attempt to create a 'spiritual community of the saved' in the mold of the 'primitive church,' and a reliance on the community to establish its beliefs and practices without interference from a remote power. This dissertation considers the similarities among the QWH, but a topic that deserves more consideration in the future is the way that the influence of specific times and circumstances can alter the trajectory of a community's search for God and the truth.

³²⁵ See: Sections 2.5.9. and 2.5.11.

Although the QWH differed markedly from other sects and although the three movements did not share every belief, they also drew from a stream of thought that runs through Christian theology from its beginnings. In acting on their conclusions regarding the proper form and nature of worship, the QWH were emulating early church fathers, such as Augustine and Ambrose of Milan,³²⁶ who argued over the nature of the Church; the relationship between the clergy, laity, and God; man's place in the universe; and other theological issues. The QWH sought to strengthen their ultimate beliefs by drawing on earlier church sources, placing emphasis on those written closer to the time of Christ, thus giving the Bible the greater weight than human law and tradition. Throughout the Church's history, many of the ideas that formed the correspondence among the QWH can be found in other sects and heresies, lending more evidence for the QWH's inclusion in a larger discussion of non-orthodox, Christian thought. This relationship is beyond the scope of this dissertation but is a worthy subject for future scholarship based on the correspondence explored here.

Ultimately, even though the QWH share some characteristics with other groups and sects of their times, this dissertation asserts that the correspondence they shared with each other is unique. Wycliffe, Hus, and the Early Quakers were individual in their own right, but they all shared a common theological ancestry. How this common ancestry resulted in disparate sects with great diversity in belief has important implications for understanding Christian theological thought in general and the theology of groups (including modern Quakers) descendant from the QWH.

³²⁶ Ozment, *The Age of Reform*, 54-55.

Chapter Five: Conclusion

5.1. Introduction

This chapter summarizes the arguments in the previous chapters (namely, the exact nature of the QWH's correspondence and manifestation of the points of correspondence in each individual movement), outlines the relevance of these arguments to other fields of scholarship, and suggests possible avenues for future scholarship.

As has been shown, the nine elements listed below were defining elements of each of the groups studied and, when compared across theologies, demonstrate the correspondence among the QWH:

1. Accessibility of Christ's Message
2. Two Separate Churches
3. Authority of the Bible
4. Personal Study of the Bible and Translation to the Vernacular
5. Opposition to Established Churches
6. Return to 'Primitive Church'
7. Reforming Tendencies
8. Imminence of Christ's Return
9. Role of Women

These nine characteristics were central to each individual movement and illustrate a specific correspondence among them. These characteristics are evidenced in the primary sources of Wycliffe, Hus, and Early Quaker leaders, such as Fox, as well as in the scholarship examining these groups.

5.2. Dissertation Outline

Chapter 1 introduced the thesis that a correspondence exists between the QWH. This chapter included an overview of the scholarly literature concerning Wycliffe and the Lollards, Hus and the Hussites, and the Quakers.¹ This chapter argued for the use of specific primary sources, such as Fox's *Some Principles*, which provide key evidence as to the character and nature of the Early Quakers.

Chapter 2 identified and described the specific characteristics of the Early Quakers. Although this dissertation concurs with the traditional starting point of Quakerism, held to be Fox's preaching in 1646 and 1647,² it departs from prior research to show that the early period ended in 1678, when the LYM, working in conjunction with the SDMM,³ effectively exerted a centralized control on Quaker life, creating an archetype of Quaker characteristics outlined in works, such as Barclay's *Apology*, Nayler's *Love to the Lost*, Burrough's *Declaration of Faith*, and Fox's *Some Principles*, which illuminated the beliefs of Early Quakers prior to this codification.

Once these working parameters were established, Chapter 2 investigated the characteristics of Early Quakers and considered in particular the scholarship of Spencer and Moore,⁴ whose recent work examined the Early Quakers, identifying specific characteristics that they conclude are vital to understanding them. These lists, combined with this author's own analysis, resulted in a new and original list of the characteristics that best defined the Early Quakers during the period from 1646 to 1678:

1. Conversion

¹ See: Section 1.3.

² See: Section 2.2.

³ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 227; and Tarter, 'Go North' 91–92.

⁴ See: Section 2.4.

2. Seeking
3. Walking in the Light (Conformity of Conduct)
4. Eschatology
5. Suffering
6. Charismatic/Evangelistic
7. Spirit-Led
8. Mystical
9. Leveling
10. Bible
11. Primitive Christianity Restored

These characteristics defined the Early Quaker movement. They were the basis for the movement's theological, social, and political positions,⁵ and they are central to understanding how Early Quakers were perceived internally and externally. As Sewell described it:

We are truly comforted, in that we understand there is such a general concurrence and union among Friends, with our former earnest desires and counsel, for true and universal love, unity, peace, and good order to be earnestly endeavored and maintained among us, as a peculiar people, chosen of the Lord out of the world, to bear a faithful testimony to his holy name and truth, in all respects; and that all that is contrary be watched against and avoided; as strife, discord, contention, and disputes tending to divisions, may be utterly suppressed and laid aside, as the light and righteous judgment of truth require.⁶

The Quakers came to view themselves as a people apart, marked by their peculiarities.⁷ They sought to be an example for the world, living 'in the Light.' Although these peculiarities

⁵ See: Sections 2.4. and 2.5.

⁶ Sewell, *The History of the Rise*, 441.

⁷ The Quaker use of the term 'peculiar people' was rooted in biblical language. For example, from 1 Peter 2:9–10 'But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye

came to define Quakers in the Quietest period⁸ through to the modern era, they are rooted in the 11 defining characteristics of Early Quakers.

Chapter 3 examined Wycliffe and Hus in detail, considering their history, their major works, their theology and practice, and their political and social impact. This discussion formed the basis for consideration of the individual aspects that influenced their theology and practice and distinguished the constellation of beliefs espoused by Wycliffe and Hus from other heretical sects. The detailed examination of these characteristics included their development, how they were disseminated, and how they were put into practice. From this discussion emerged the characteristics that constitute the correspondence among the QWH.

Section 3.4 examined the Wycliffe–Hus connection, laying out the historical evidence for this connection, focusing on the transmission of Wycliffe’s beliefs and works from Oxford to Bohemia, facilitated by factors such as the relationship between the universities of Prague and Oxford⁹ and the marriage of Anne of Bohemia to King Richard of England.¹⁰ This section also examined the pre-Wycliffite influences on Hus, including the Bohemian reformers who came before him as well as his experience as rector of the Church of Bethlehem.¹¹ This section showed that Hus’ beliefs were clearly aligned with Wycliffe’s

should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light: Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.’ In the Bible, this term is used to set apart God’s chosen people, marking them by their peculiarities as distinct from others. Quakers viewed their own peculiarities as being a mark of God, something to be proud of and to actively cultivate as a way of defining themselves. See: Pilgrim, ‘Taming Anarchy,’ in *The Creation of Quaker Theory*, 214.

⁸ The Quietest period of Quakerism occurred during the 18th century. It was marked by an increasing tension between the outside world and the lifestyle threshed out after the early Quaker period. Quakers during the Quietest period ‘called for an emptying of all actions motivated by human will be open to the guidance of God in worship, in the conduct of business meeting, and in the attending to leadings.’ Abbott et al., *The A to Z of Quakers*, 236. This tension lead to the creation of the ‘hedge,’ or a set of peculiarities and traditions which set the Quakers as a distinct group of people. See: Pilgrim, ‘Taming Anarchy,’ 213; and Spencer, ‘Holiness: The Quaker Way to Perfection,’ 164–166.

⁹ See: Section 3.4.

¹⁰ See: Section 3.4.1.

¹¹ See: Section 3.4.1.2.

from an early point. However, although many of the beliefs of Hus and Wycliffe were similar, they were not identical. Section 3.4.2 outlined specific differences between Wycliffe and Hus on issues such as transubstantiation and the need for an organized, educated clergy.

Section 3.5 explored the differing theories of the nature of the connection between Wycliffe and Hus, specifically examining Hussite scholarship¹² and comparative heretical studies,¹³ concluding with this author's views that Wycliffe had a strong influence on Hus, but that Hus also drew heavily from the native Bohemian reform movement.¹⁴

This chapter concludes with a discussion of Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*, specifically the role played in it by Wycliffe and Hus, its place in English society, and the effect it had on Early Quakers.¹⁵ As discussed, this work was well known in 17th-century England, because it was required to be placed in every church along with the Book of Common Prayer. The martyrdoms of Wycliffe and Hus are specifically discussed by Foxe, who clearly sympathized with them. This section then outlined the way in which the Early Quakers used Wycliffe and Hus both as inspiration and justification for their actions and beliefs to the rest of English society.¹⁶

Chapter 4 examined the nine characteristics that define the QWH's correspondence. Each characteristic was taken in turn, with separate discussions of Wycliffe, Hus, and the Early Quakers. Through this examination, the defining similarities among the three groups emerged. These similarities informed the correspondence between QWH, showing that there was a relationship between these three groups.

¹² Section 3.5.1.

¹³ Section 3.5.2.

¹⁴ Section 3.5.3.

¹⁵ Section 3.6.

¹⁶ Section 3.7.

5.3. Summary of Arguments

The beliefs of the QWH were influenced above all by their desire to create communities of believers working together to ensure the salvation of all, based on a scripturally evidenced apostolic ideal. The QWH saw themselves as a ‘community of the saved,’ working to fight against the false teachings and practices of the Established Churches.¹⁷ They believed that Christ’s message, as presented in the Scriptures, was open and accessible to all. This accessibility was at the foundation of the theological ideal posited by the QWH.¹⁸ As stated by Hus, ‘Christ ordained all his apostles and disciples, to live an open good life, in meekness and wilful poverty, and discreet penance, to teach busily his Gospel to the people, and not to be closed in great cloisters, and costly as Caym’s castles.’¹⁹ Fox is explicit as well regarding the accessibility of Christ, stating ‘*Christ the Light, by which every one is Enlightened that comes into the World.*’²⁰ For the QWH, this was the necessary foundation for the true church, and, if it was not so based, then the entire Christian community was at risk of damnation.

For the QWH, the apostolic example of personal salvation through the direct presence of Christ was at the heart of their respective movements, as well as central to the correspondence among them. For the Early Quakers, the change experienced by the Apostles upon their conversion in Christ’s physical presence was to be spiritually mirrored in their convincement process and their belief in a realized eschatology.²¹ For Wycliffe and Hus, the belief in the Holy Spirit as an active, guiding presence within the true church echoed Christ’s presence and guiding light during apostolic times. When Wycliffe quoted Christ, he was

¹⁷ Section 4.3.1.

¹⁸ Section 4.3.1.

¹⁹ Vaughan, *The Life and Opinions*, Vol. 2, 221.

²⁰ Fox, ‘Introduction,’ in *Some Principles*, 1.

²¹ See: Sections 2.5.1 and 2.5.4.

arguing for placing the Holy Spirit in the position of scriptural interpreter that had been assumed by the Roman authorities:

But I say truth to you, it profiteth to you that I go; for if I go not, the Holy Ghost shall not come to you: and if I shall go, I shall send him to you. And when he shall come, he shall reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, also of judgment... This Holy Ghost shall enlighten me; for he shall take of mine, and show you the truth that I am, and that I have. And so in knowing of this truth, the apostles shall well know Christ: how by his Godhead he is equal with the Father; and concerning his manhood, he is one in nature with his brethren.²²

For Wycliffe, the Holy Spirit was the same as Christ, and therefore must have precedence in regards to theological understanding. Fox echoed this sentiment, concluding:

we say, *Christ* is our *Way*, who is the *Light* that doth *enlighten you*, and *every one that cometh into the world*...which is the *Way* of God, and which is the new and living *Way*, which the Apostles were in... So every one that cometh to the *Light* in their own particulars, they come to Christ, they come to the new and living *Way*, and from and out of the old and dead *Wayes*, which are in the Fall from God,...they must come to the *Light*, which Christ the *Way* hath *enlightened* them withal in their own particulars: For there is no other way to the Father, but Christ the *Light*, which doth *enlighten every one that comes into the world*, who is the *Way*, even the *new and living Way*, and hear his *Voyce* and *Teaching*; so they shall love the *Light*, love the *Way*, and love *Christ*;²³

This desire to find a path to the Holy Spirit led the QWH to reject the traditions of the Established Churches.²⁴

The QWH's attempt to emulate the experiences of the Apostles' interaction with Christ in the physical world through their belief in the constant presence of the Holy Spirit is central to the mystical nature of the QWH, which is a major point of correspondence. For the QWH, the Established Churches were circumventing the experiential side of Christianity by limiting lay accessibility to the true form of the Church. The QWH sought the feeling of the

²² John Wycliffe, *Writings of the Reverend and Learned John Wickliff*, ed. Religious Tract Society (London, UK: Religious Tract Society, 1884), 209–213.

²³ Fox, 'Concerning the Way,' in *Some Principles*, 20.

²⁴ See: Section 2.5.11.

presence of Christ, his saving grace, within. If mysticism is the attempt to experience the divine presence in everyday life, then Wycliffe's insistence on scriptural reading under the guidance of the Holy Spirit²⁵ as well as Fox's insistence on the necessity of an individual's acknowledgment of the presence of the 'Inward Light'²⁶ clearly fit this definition.

The mystical nature of the QWH's correspondence, along with the emulation of a primitive Christianity, placed them in conflict with authorities of the Established Churches. Although many of the QWH's grievances, such as simony or the selling of indulgences, were also attacked by other groups, the QWH used the existence of these practices, which deviated so profoundly from the experience of the early church, to buttress their argument for a return to a primitive Christianity. As Hus argued:

apostolic means keeping the way of an apostle. Just as, therefore, a true Christian is one who follows Christ in his life, so a truly apostolic man is the priest who follows the teaching of the apostles, living the life of an apostle and teaching his doctrine. Hence, any pope is to be called apostolic so far as he teaches the doctrine of the apostles and follows them in works. But, if he puts the teaching of the apostles aside, teaching in word or works what is contrary, then he is properly called pseudo-apostolic or an apostate.²⁷

Fox likewise stated:

Teachers, Prophets, Shepherds, Elders and Bishops, they must not be such as are given to filthy lucre, nor covetous, nor given to wine; they must not be strikers, nor brawlers, nor seekers of Earthly things; they must not teach for filthy lucre, nor be covetous, nor strive about words, nor use Fables, nor Philosophy, nor the worlds Rudiments, nor Traditions, nor Doctrins of men, nor their Ordinances; they must not compel their People to observe Dayes, Meats, Drinks, and such like things; they must not bear rule by their means, nor such as seek for their gain from their Quarter, for such are forbid; and such as teach for money and pieces of bread, and such as taught for Gain were forbid, and witnessed against by the true Prophets and Teachers, and Apostles.²⁸

²⁵ See: Section 3.2.4.

²⁶ As seen in both his *Journal*, 101, and 'Introduction,' in *Some Principles* 5-9.

²⁷ Hus, *De Ecclesia: The Church*, Trans. David Schaff, 197.

²⁸ Fox, 'Concerning Teachers, Prophets, Shepherds, Bishops, Elders, &c.,' in *Some Principles*, 18-19.

In many ways, the Early Quakers were more the true inheritors of the legacy of Wycliffe and Hus than other Reformation groups. As Barbour states, ‘The Society of Friends formed as a culmination of and reaction to the Protestant Reformation’²⁹ As shown by Ozment, ‘heretics such as Jan Huss and John Wycliffe had little influence on the Reformers, with the exception of Martin Luther, who seems to have been conscious that his teachings were similar to those of some of the religious movements of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.’³⁰ The QWH’s insistence on attempting to return to the apostolic era was not a characteristic of the Reformation and was rarely considered by the founders of major Protestant sects, such as Martin Luther, John Calvin, or Ulrich Zwingli.³¹ This emphasis on a return to the apostolic era is both a marked difference between the QWH and these ‘Magisterial’ Reformers³² and a central characteristic of the QWH’s correspondence.

The QWH’s attempt to return to the primitive church, recreating Christ’s presence on earth, informed other characteristics of the QWH’s correspondence, including their views on the role of women in the church and their belief in social leveling.³³ The QWH sought to recreate the Kingdom of the Lord, which necessarily had certain social implications along with the theological ones. These social implications were significant factors in the

²⁹ Hugh Barbour and J. William Frost. *The Quakers*. (Richmond, IN: Friends United Press), 4.

³⁰ Ozment, *The Age of Reform*, 145.

³¹ Alister McGrath, *Reformation Thought: an Introduction* (Oxford, England; Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2000), 5.

³² Martin Luther, Ulrich Zwingli and John Calvin are considered magisterial reformers because their respective reform movements were supported by ruling secular authorities or ‘magistrates.’ Frederick the Wise not only supported Luther, who was a professor at the university he founded, but also protected him by hiding Luther in Wartburg Castle in Eisenach. Zwingli and Calvin were supported by the city councils in Zurich and Geneva, respectively. Since the term ‘magister’ also means ‘teacher,’ the Magisterial Reformation is characterized by an emphasis on the authority of a teacher. Because of their belief in church authorities, Luther, Calvin, and Zwingli were often criticized by more radical reformers as being too much like the popes. This allegiance with secular authority and the determination to maintain some form of church hierarchy distinguish each of these sects from those like the Lollards and Hussites before them and the Early Quakers after them who espoused a more direct communion between God and the individual and a return to a primitive, non-hierarchical church. Other aspects of the theology of the three magisterial reformers are discussed below. McGrath, *Reformation Thought*, 5-7.

³³ See: Sections 4.2.6. and 4.2.9.

persecution suffered by the QWH, and they constitute yet more ways in which the QWH existed outside the boundaries of accepted norms.

The individual points of departure among the QWH are instructive in understanding that they were products of their respective environments. Wycliffe's views on the apostasy of the papacy were colored by the long-standing English resentment of papal authority.³⁴ Hus' insistence on the practice of Utraquism reflected the theology of his native Bohemia.³⁵ Early Quaker rejection of carnal weapons for spiritual ones reflected the realities they faced with the restoration of the monarchy.³⁶ Although the underlying correspondence between the QWH is based on the same fundamental theological underpinnings, their individuality stems in part from their respective reactions to the world around them.

5.4. Implications of This Research

This dissertation has direct implications for four fields of study: Quaker Studies, Comparative Theology, 17th-Century English Studies, and Heretical Studies. It also raises significant areas for future research. These are considered in turn.

5.4.1. Quaker Studies

This work is a part of a debate started by Jones in *Spiritual Mysticism*,³⁷ wherein he outlined his belief that Early Quakers and their descendants were a Christian-based mystical sect, one with direct and indirect relationships to the 16th- and 17th-century continental mystics. In the nearly 100 years since Jones' work, academics have developed many

³⁴ See: Section 3.2.

³⁵ See: Section 3.3.

³⁶ See: Section 2.2.

³⁷ For a discussion of Jones and his effect on Quaker scholarship, Hamm, 'George Fox and the Politics of Late Nineteenth-century Quaker Historiography,' 11.

different (yet often complementary) views on the origins of the Early Quakers.³⁸ Barbour argued that early Quakerism should be viewed in terms of a continuation of the radical branch of Puritanism.³⁹ Spencer's work focuses on Early Quakers and 'Holiness,'⁴⁰ whereas Reay argued for a closer look at Quakerism's roots in the 17th-century British rural middle class.⁴¹ Gwyn argues for an Early Quakerism defined by eschatological view points, aligning Early Quaker theology with other apocalyptic sects.⁴²

Based on the corresponding characteristics of the QWH, this dissertation reinforces the work of Braithwaite and Jones, Moore, Reynolds, Tarter, and Spencer, as discussed in Chapters 1⁴³ and 2,⁴⁴ arguing for a more enthusiastic, spirit-led, and mystical understanding of the Early Quakers when compared with the next generation of Quakers. These traits appear in primary sources, such as Fox's *Some Principles*:

The *Light* which Christ hath Enlightened you withall, is that which makes manifest all that is contrary to it; The same *Light* makes manifest the Saviour from whence it comes, And makes manifest Christ to be the Covenant of Light and Life through which you may come to have Peace with God.⁴⁵

Jones and Braithwaite argued from these primary sources for a more mystical understanding of the Early Quakers, which led Moore to explore the 'fringe' aspects of the Quaker movement before censorship.⁴⁶ For Spencer, these traits are the foundation for the Early Quaker emphasis on holiness and perfection.⁴⁷ For Tarter, the enthusiasm and spirit-led nature of the Early Quaker movement was expressed through its female members, who, from

³⁸ See: Section 1.3.1.

³⁹ Barbour and Frost, *The Quakers*, 16–17.

⁴⁰ Spencer, 'Holiness: The Quaker Way to Perfection,' 153.

⁴¹ Reay, *The Quakers and the English Revolution*, 1–4.

⁴² Gwyn, *Apocalypse of the Word*, i–xxii; and Gwyn, *Seekers Found*, 1–16.

⁴³ See: Section 1.3.1.

⁴⁴ See: Section 2.2.

⁴⁵ Fox, 'Introduction,' in *Some Principles*, 5–9.

⁴⁶ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, xii, and 'Research Methods,' 236–237.

⁴⁷ Spencer, 'Holiness: The Quaker Way to Perfection,' 155–160.

the start, were integral and outspoken, but whose suppression by the central authorities shows the changing nature of the Quaker movement between Early Quakers and subsequent generations.⁴⁸ This mystical nature of the early Quaker movement also led Reynolds to explore the relationship between the Early Quakers and Gnostic theology.⁴⁹

Although these authors differ on the exact nature of Early Quakerism, all agree that Early Quakers were exemplified by enthusiastic displays of religious belief, particularly in their attempts to reestablish Christ's presence as a reality, as in the apostolic era. This enthusiasm caused the central authorities to exert their control on the movement, attempting to quash those elements that could cause confusion or discomfort. Each scholar's work highlights some of these aspects, showing them to be integral in defining and understanding the Early Quakers. In the eleven characteristics outlined in Chapter 2, the enthusiastic, spirited, and mystical nature of the Early Quakers is dominant.

Scholars such as Nuttall and Barbour, who focus on the Puritan influence on Early Quakers, dismiss the importance of the mystical nature of the Early Quaker movement. For these scholars, 'Most recent studies of Early Friends have overlooked the spiritual depth and vitality for three generations of the Puritans, the dominant religious movement in England.'⁵⁰ Reay and Vann's focus on the social status of the Early Quakers also downplays the importance of the mysticism of the movement.

Based on the evidence in primary and secondary sources, along with the examples provided by the correspondence with Wycliffe and Hus, this dissertation argues the Early Quakers' primary goal was to recapture the presence of Christ in everyday life based on their

⁴⁸ Tarter, 'Go North!' 89–91.

⁴⁹ Reynolds, 'George Fox and Christian Gnosis,' 99.

⁵⁰ Barbour, 'Sixty Years in Early Quaker History,' in *The Creation of Quaker Theory*, ed. Pink Dandelion. (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate Publishing, 2004), 21–22.

understanding of Scripture. The Early Quaker emphasis on the real-world consequences of the presence of the Holy Spirit shows that they wished to recreate the experiences of the Apostles, and, although they could not experience the physical presence of Christ in the same way, they could do so spiritually.⁵¹ Although not rejecting outright the work of Gwyn, Reay, and Barbour, this dissertation argues for a different understanding of the context in which to place the Early Quakers.

By identifying the correspondence between the QWH, this dissertation makes an original contribution to the larger debate about the Early Quakers' theological underpinnings. Gwyn argues that Early Quaker theology depends on Scripture and was distinctly apocalyptical in nature.⁵² Moore argues that Early Quakers used Scripture for imagery and language, contending that the Bible did not play as significant a role in the development of Quaker theology as proposed by Gwyn.

By exploring the various ways in which the Early Quakers were related to those groups that came before, it becomes possible to place the Early Quakers in the larger Christian theological framework, both historically and with the Early Quakers' contemporaries. The mystical nature of Early Quakers, their insistence on the return to the primitive church, and their rejection of the Established Churches' control align them with many different theological camps.⁵³ As Punshon states:

To look for the 'origins', or worse the 'causes', of Quakerism is to ask far too wide a question. It had as many causes and origins as it had members... Rather than being able to trace one line of development from Puritanism to

⁵¹ Spencer, 'Holiness: The Quaker Way to Perfection,' 154–155.

⁵² Gwyn, *Apocalypse of the Word*, xxii.

⁵³ Such as the Anabaptists (Punshon, *Portrait in Grey*, 17–21) or the Gnostics (Reynolds, 'George Fox and Christian Gnosis,' 99).

Anabaptism or Continental Spiritual religion, we can see that it had elements of all these things.⁵⁴

Clearly there is no specific group or place of origin for the Quaker movement; rather, as Jones, Moore, and Tarter show, the Early Quakers were a community whose diverse backgrounds gave them many theological perspectives.⁵⁵ This diversity was ultimately viewed by the leadership as a threat, resulting in tremendous effort spent to polish the public image of the Early Quakers by eliminating diversity through the Gospel Ordering.⁵⁶ The Gospel Ordering defined the archetypical ‘Quaker,’ adhering to a specific theology and social philosophy.

There is no single explanation for the creation and promulgation of Quakerism, or why it survived and thrived. This dissertation furthers the conversation and gives others the tools to better understand how the Early Quakers formed and what they believed. It also shows the Early Quakers’ ability to adapt to their surroundings, allowing for their survival.

5.4.2. Comparative Theology

By outlining the correspondence among the QWH, this dissertation demonstrates that some theological concepts—their development and expression in practice—are strongly influenced by the time and place in which they emerge. Different groups may come to the same theological conclusion, but their practices will not necessarily be the same. At the same time, groups with very similar practices may have widely divergent theological underpinnings for those practices. Authors such as Russell, Hill, Estep, and Ozment illuminate the ways in which different groups were influenced by one another and the extent

⁵⁴ Punshon, *Portrait in Grey*, 34–35.

⁵⁵ See: Section 2.4.

⁵⁶ See: Section 2.4.

to which theological beliefs were passed, directly and indirectly, from one group to another.⁵⁷

This dissertation will assist other academics to explore the theological links between the belief and practice of three specific groups.

As to the influence of Wycliffe on Hus, this dissertation lends weight to the conclusions reached by Fudge, Spinka, and Russell that Hus was more than merely the puppet of Wycliffe.⁵⁸ This dissertation shows that, although the QWH drew from a similar theological understanding, the individual groups were not identical. These differences came primarily from the nature of the society in which each group arose.⁵⁹ This dissertation affects Reformation studies in a similar way. By illustrating the similarities and differences between the QWH and how they arose, the divergences between the various Reformation sects can be better understood.

5.4.3. 17th-Century English History

Quakerism was a product of its time and place:⁶⁰ ‘they were originally as English as a wet summer Sunday, and it is in England that any telling of their story must begin.’⁶¹ Early Quakerism was a uniquely 17th-century English institution, notwithstanding its similarities to other contemporary groups and to historical antecedents, including Wycliffe and Hus.⁶²

In outlining the correspondence among the QWH, specifically those aspects of Quakerism that were different, such as the Early Quaker rejection of predestination, this dissertation demonstrates the effects English society had on the Early Quaker movement. In

⁵⁷ See: Section 1.3.2.

⁵⁸ See: Section 3.4.

⁵⁹ Such as Hus’ practice of Utraquism. See: Section 3.4.

⁶⁰ See: Section 2.2.

⁶¹ Punshon, *Portrait in Grey*, 5.

⁶² See: Section 2.4. and 3.7.

the tradition of authors such Hill⁶³ and Moore,⁶⁴ this dissertation takes into account the diverse historical agents in play during the 17th century. Hill shows the effect that the Early Quakers and the larger English society had on one another. He:

deals with what from one point of view are subsidiary episodes and ideas in the English Revolution, the attempts of various groups of the common people to impose their own solutions to the problems of their times, in opposition to the wishes of their betters who had called them into political action.⁶⁵

The correspondence among the QWH expands on this research, illustrating how 17th-century English society took its form. Better understanding of Early Quakers informs the consideration of how one group of ‘the common people’ can have a direct effect on their times and how they can be affected by those times.

This dissertation allows the researcher in 17th-century English history to gain a better understanding of the role played by the Early Quakers during this turbulent period by showing both the similarities and the unique characteristics of the early Quaker experience and the extent to which those characteristics were the product of or influenced by English society.

5.4.4. Heretical Studies

In regards to heretical studies, this work expands on the work of Russell,⁶⁶ Ozment,⁶⁷ and Lambert,⁶⁸ who seek to understand the interconnected relationships between various heretical groups. By expanding on the previously established relationship between Wycliffe and Hus to include their relationship to the Early Quakers, this work furthers the arguments made by Russell and Ozment that heresies did not form in vacuums, instead affecting one

⁶³ Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down*, 1.

⁶⁴ Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, xi–xii.

⁶⁵ Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down*, 1–3.

⁶⁶ Russell, *Dissent and Order*, 1–9.

⁶⁷ Ozment, *The Age of Reform*, 1–21.

⁶⁸ Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 1–14.

another's theology and practices as they interacted with one another. The similarities and differences found in the QWH's correspondence help illustrate the way heresies affected one another, as well as the effect of the time and place on an individual heresy.

5.4.5. Future Scholarship

This dissertation presents an opportunity to continue the study of the Early Quakers and their theological beliefs and the relationship of those beliefs to other theological precursors. It is important for the academic community to understand the place of Early Quaker theology in the larger context of Christian thought. The relationship between the QWH and other spiritual communities requires more study, to outline more thoroughly the theological stream to which the QWH belongs.

By examining earlier Christian theological constructs to establish the various characteristics that make up the QWH's correspondence, distinct strands of belief, such as a return to the primitive church, can be traced back to the medieval heresies and then back to the founding of Christianity. Continuing to examine these characteristics in different theological and social constructs will permit further identification of the circumstances that led to these characteristics being adopted by their proponents. By tracing the history and location of groups who have characteristics of correspondence similar to the QWH, it becomes possible to understand the circumstances that led to these beliefs and practices becoming prevalent. One avenue for exploration is to continue the search for specific modes of transmission for these beliefs and practices, thereby establishing whether there are specific agents of transmission or whether they are the conclusions reached by each group, independently of one another, in the context of their own circumstances.

Another area of inquiry suggested by this dissertation is a more detailed examination of the individual characteristics, such as Christ's imminent return or the emphasis on personal

salvation, that make up the QWH's correspondence. By tracing the histories and different views of various Christian communities regarding these theological beliefs, it will be possible to identify those aspects that give them relevance to their adherents as well as the implications of that relevance. By examining each individual characteristic, future scholars will be able to find the historical and social constructs that influenced their creation, as well as the effect these beliefs had on the societies in which they appeared.

5.4.6. Section Summary

This section examined the ways in which this dissertation analyzes and expands upon different strands of scholarship, with future implications for each. With regard to Early Quaker history, this dissertation uses the work of Jones, Moore, and Spencer to establish a specific strain of mysticism and spirituality within the Early Quaker movement, a strain that was largely eliminated by later Quakers to present a more respectable public face. This section also explained how the dissertation has an effect on the study of comparative theology, expanding on the debate over the influence of Wycliffe on Hus. It allows for a more thorough understanding of the effect of different theological systems on one another. This section also outlined how this dissertation has implications for 17th-century English studies, particularly the effect English society had on Early Quakers and vice versa.

Finally, this section explored areas of future scholarship. Three specific areas of future scholarship emerge: the relationship of Early Quakers' theological beliefs to those of other theological precursors, the Early Quakers' position in the larger Christian theological world, and more detailed study of each of the individual characteristics that make up the QWH's correspondence.

5.5. Chapter Summary

This chapter recapitulated the arguments in this dissertation to define, evaluate, and discuss the correspondence between the QWH. It began with Section 5.1, ‘Introduction,’ which discussed the main thesis of this work, namely that a correspondence existed among the QWH based on their interpretation of Scripture, which, in turn, led them to seek a restoration of the primitive church, not merely a reformation of the Established Churches.

Next, in Section 5.2, ‘Dissertation Outline,’ the four previous Chapters were reviewed. After Chapter 1’s introduction to the subjects considered and a review of the literature, Chapters 2 and 3 investigated the Quakers, Wycliffe, and Hus, focusing specifically on their formation, history, beliefs, practices, and impacts. Chapter 4 brought together the previous chapters to define and discuss the characteristics of correspondence among the QWH.

Section 5.3, ‘Summary of Arguments,’ summarized the individual arguments made in this dissertation. These include how the QWH sought to create communities of believers who worked corporately to ensure their salvation. These communities were an attempt to recreate a primitive form of the church as found in Scripture. The QWH attempted to create in their world the same experiences of the Apostles, specifically their interaction with Christ’s physical form through the belief in the presence of an active Holy Spirit, which gave the QWH their mystical nature. This section also focused on showing how Early Quakers were more similar in both belief and practice to Wycliffe and Hus than to the more conservative elements of the Reformation, as represented by the Magisterial Reformers.

Finally, Section 5.4, ‘Implications of This Research,’ explored the place this dissertation holds in relationship to four distinct academic areas: Quaker Studies, Comparative Theology, 17th-Century English History, and Heretical Studies. This section

then considers future areas of inquiry suggested by the original contribution to scholarship made by this dissertation.

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